



**Legislative Assembly of Nunavut**

**Speaker**

**Hon. Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeeagok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister Responsible for Mines; Minister Responsible for Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister Responsible for Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister Responsible for Trade; Minister responsible for Human Rights Tribunal; Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for Labour*

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister Responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors*

**Bobby Anavilok**  
(Kugluktuk)

**Janet Brewster**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**  
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister of Human Resources; Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**George Hicket**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Chair of the Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. David Joanasi**  
(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services*

**Joelie Kaernek**  
(Amittuq)

**Mary Killiktee**  
(Uqqummiut)

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**  
(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Board; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation*

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Hon. John Main**  
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation*

**Solomon Malliki**  
(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister Responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

**Karen Nutarak**  
(Tununiq)

**Daniel Qavvik**  
(Hudson Bay)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Environment; Minister responsible for Energy; Minister responsible for Languages*

**Joanna Quassa**  
(Aggu)

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**  
(Netsilik)

**Alexander Sammurtok**  
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

**Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)  
*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Craig Simailak**  
(Baker Lake)

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Wednesday, October 30, 2024**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Mr. Joeline Kaernerck, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:32*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Mr. Tony Akeoak) (interpretation): (No interpretation)

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker:** To My household members at home watching, my wife and the kids and the grandkids, (no interpretation). Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Minister's Statements**

**Minister's Statement 486 – 6(2): Engagements Regarding Arctic Sovereignty and Security**

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, fellow members, Nunavummiut, those listening or watching on TV.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues about two recent engagements where I had the opportunity to promote Nunavut's strategic interests, considering Arctic sovereignty and security. It is no secret we are facing challenging times under the current geopolitical landscape. Our ties with our friends and allies will be critical in how the Arctic responds to these challenges, with 20 per cent of Canada's land mass, Nunavut must play a significant role in Canada's Arctic strategy, Mr. Speaker.

To ensure that these Nunavut interests are not lost in these conversations, I have been taking the opportunity to engage with international partners. On September 29, just a few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to co-host the Canada Nordic Foreign Ministers Strategic dialogue, with Canada's foreign minister Mélanie Joly right here in Iqaluit.

The meeting brought forward together foreign ministers of Canada, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Norway, and Sweden, and senior officials from foreign ministry officials from Greenland Finland and Iceland with the goal of increasing collaboration and shared priorities across the north. Minister Joanase and Minister Akeegok took part in these meetings.

Together we discussed the challenging security dynamics in the Arctic and how to advance security through sustainable economic development. It was enlightening to see that our challenges, but also our opportunities, are aligned across the north.

At the meeting I had stressed that Nunavut welcomed the federal defence policy update and its potential contributions to the north. I also noted that more must be done to safeguard Arctic sovereignty and security, and show Canada's commitment to our territories.

Nordic ambassadors agreed that there was more need for greater investments in robust multi-purpose infrastructure that protects the north, stimulates our economies, and supports the well-being of our communities.

I was also invited to take part in the 2024 Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, Iceland. My engagement included presenting on two panels. Mr. Speaker, I had discussed the Memorandum of Understanding and between Nunavut and Greenland in a panel focussing on Greenland's foreign security and defence policy. I also took part in Canada's perspective on Arctic security, a panel hosted by the North American and Arctic Defence and Security Network.

While in Iceland I also took part in numerous other meetings and discussions with leaders across the globe interested in circumpolar issues. Mr. Speaker, I know these engagements will go a long way to ensure that Nunavut's interests are top of mind when it comes to Arctic sovereignty and security. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeegok.

### **Minister's Statement 487 – 6(2): Tourism Statistics Collection**

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this summer my department's Tourism and Cultural Industries division, in collaborations with Statistics Canada resumed visitors exit survey. The survey collects answers to questions on spending habits of visitors, province or country of origin, and trip activities while in Nunavut. With the help of the summer students and the departmental staff, we conducted



air exit surveys in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay airports. Also, cruise exit surveys were conducted in Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay, and Pond Inlet.

The information collected will be used by the government and the private sectors to allow efficiency, targeted marketing efforts. This along with new CanNor funding will help better market Nunavut as tourism destination and cater to those visitors.

Another benefit of the data collection program is that it allowed employment of six summer students across the three regions. These students obtained valuable training and work experience. One of the summer students received a job offer from Statistics Canada to work in their Ottawa office. We expect to see the full aggregate results from Statistics Canada in December. The exit survey will be an annual program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

#### **Minister's Statement 488 – 6(2): Early Childhood Education Training Options**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, fellow members, Nunavummiut, and Pangnirtummiut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker in recognition of the first annual Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day announced this week by Education Minister Pamela Gross, I am pleased to update this House on the efforts made by Nunavut Arctic College to offer training in this vital area.

(interpretation) In the 2024 academic year seven students are currently enrolled in the one-year full-time early childhood program certificate in Iqaluit. The program combines an online course and in-person delivery and practicums. The model allows students to split their training between on the job and students allowed to earn income while completing their studies, and balancing family responsibilities.

This adaptive delivery model that provides program design, delivery, tuition, salary support, is made through collaboration between Arctic College, government, and Inuit organizations. Plans are underway for new cohorts online and in Pangnirtung and Cambridge Bay in 2025.

This program continues to roll out in the different communities. Additional resources and best practices will be collected and integrated in future deliveries.

Mr. Speaker, we are equipping our students with the tools they need to succeed and contribute to the future of childcare in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Minister's Statement 489 – 6(2): School Mental Health Support Services**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker, and good day to Nunavummiut. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education recognizes the importance of supporting students, mental health and well-being. We also recognize the essential partnership with parents in ensuring every child and youth has the tools they need to thrive, both academically and emotionally.

The department continues to enhance mental health supports available in schools. We initially piloted school mental health services in 2019, expanding every year, and were territory-wide in 2023-2024. We continue to evolve these services and based on feedback collected this school year, we have increased in-person support while still providing virtual services and engaging parents.

Mr. Speaker, offering an important level of continuity year after year, our school mental health professionals have built positive and supportive relationships with students, staff, parents and community partners. These trusted connections are the foundation of effective and timely preventative and proactive support. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Minister's Statement 490 – 6(2): Mental Health in Nunavut (Main)**

**Hon. John Main (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, fellow members.

The Department of Health is committed to addressing suicide through initiatives aimed at promoting life and mental wellness through partnerships and interdepartmental collaboration. Today I am pleased to be tabling the fourth Inuusivut Anninaqtuq 2024 Action Plan, a plan that was created with input from many Nunavummiut, including youth, elders, mental health experts and my colleagues here in the House. This plan was initiated in June 2022 with the Inuusivut Anninaqtuq partners with a targeted approach.

(Interpretation ends) The partners have aimed for no duplication of programs and services increasing collaboration between agencies and departments, supporting longevity of programs and using, measurable action items.

Through the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Summit in October 2022, two key decisions were made. They were that the plan must reflect the youth voice priority activities, and accountability and reporting must be supported by clearly assigning responsibility for specific action items.

Mr. Speaker, during lunch here in the Legislative Assembly, I was honoured to take part in a signing ceremony where the partners in the action plan showed their respective commitments to implementing it in the years ahead.

Suicide prevention is only one part of the work being done to support mental health in Nunavut. We know mental health affects many Nunavummiut, 365 days a year, and we remain committed to delivering effective mental health and addiction services as close to home as possible.

Thanks to our partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and Indigenous Services Canada, Aqqusariaq is under construction and remains on track to accept the first clients in early 2026. Once open, Aqqusariaq will provide safe care for people with addictions and trauma and address Inuit-specific needs right here in the territory.

Addressing trauma and addiction is a crucial part of our mental health strategy, but prevention is also key. This month, in collaboration with the Department of Education, mental health kits were distributed to schools across the territory. These kits, rooted Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, help students build essential life skills. By focussing on early intervention we can equip young people with the mental health skills they need to navigate life's stresses.

(Interpretation) In closing, I want to emphasize, Nunavummiut, that if you or someone you know is struggling, you are not alone and it is okay to ask for help. There are those that can provide you support, and they can do confidential support resources can be found on Health's website at [inuusiq.com](http://inuusiq.com) or by visiting your local health centre or public health unit. You can also go there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

### **Minister's Statement 491 – 6(2): Legal Registries Update**

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Legal Registries Office is responsible for administering the registration of corporations, commercial documents, societies, land ownership and securities in accordance with the territorial legislation. Due in part to staffing shortage and turnovers, in 2023 Legal Registries was experiencing delays and processing time, with some registrations taking weeks to be processed.

I am pleased to share that after a significant focus on staffing, training, and identifying efficiencies, the Legal Registries Office is now processing same-day registrations for most filings, with a maximum turnaround time of two days. The new processing times means that the office can process more applications and respond to clients sooner. This promotes business and non-profit development across the territory, and helps Nunavummiut achieve important milestones, like buying homes sooner. It also means that other parts of legal registries office can do more, as resources can now be redirected to other tasks, creating more efficiencies that benefit Nunavummiut and organizations.

The significant improvement to processing time has lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and greater compliance with legal requirements.

I want to thank the Legal Registries Office management and staff for their hard work and dedication. Every member of the Legal Registries team plays a critical role in not only streamlining process, but also fostering a supportive atmosphere that encourage innovation and future positive change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

#### **Minister's Statement 492 – 6(2): Honouring 25 Years of Continuous Service**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again. Mr. Speaker, today I honour Rankin Inlet resident Lillian Okpatauyak, a long-time employee of the Department of Family Services. Ms. Okpatauyak served as a public servant with the Government of Nunavut for 25 years. She began her career as a receptionist with the Department of Social Services before becoming a social worker. Ms. Okpatauyak then became an income assistant worker, and then the income assistance regional manager.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Lillian Okpatauyak's commitment to public service and to her community and to her colleagues is an inspiration for all Nunavummiut. As Nunavut is celebrating 25 years since it was created, Ms. Okpatauyak was there right from the beginning, building and supporting the services and communities that we have today. Thank you for 25 years of continuous service to the Department of Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Item 3. Member's Statement. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

### Item 3: Members' Statements

#### Member's Statement 656 – 6(2): Ilitaqsiniq in Baker Lake

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon all. (interpretation) People of Qamani'tuaq, have a good day. (interpretation ends) I would like to recognize a new organization that started up in Baker Lake, the early years program, which just began. Mr. Speaker, they have hired seven full-time Baker Lake employees which consist of four visitors one driver, one culture program coordinator, and one program manager. They will also be hiring as and when needed cooks, sewing content specialists, and childcare providers while moms and dads are learning in a program.

Mr. Speaker, the early years program works with young children and families with a strong understanding of early learning and children's wholistic development. They also work with pregnant ladies to provide more awareness of healthy pregnancy and healthy development of the baby in the womb. Participants can either get home visits or drop into the visitor centre for an hour each week. So far they have a little over 60 family participants and more applications have been coming in.

They launched the program just this month, on October 18, 2024, and it's already a great success with family participants. The staff were hired in August to prepare the visitors centre for the early years program. This program will run until the end March 2025. They hope to extend it longer. It will depend on whether or not they can receive more funding.

Mr. Speaker, this would not have been available if the Inuit Child First Initiative was not an option. I wish the group a continued success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Member's Statement. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

#### Member's Statement 657 – 6(2): Medical Travel Services in Kitikmeot

**Mr. Anavilok:** (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) This member statement is on Kitikmeot concerns on medical services by air. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the attention of this House some concerns regarding medical services that rely on our airline groups. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the Government of Nunavut published an announcement on Facebook to Kitikmeot medical travelers aware that some medical appointments may be relocated to Edmonton or other locations due to a lack of accommodations in Yellowknife during the Aurora tourist season.

Unfortunately, not everyone got the memo. Two of our constituents, Mr. Speaker, were booked through Yellowknife to travel from medical appointments in Edmonton back to

Gjoa Haven. With a delay in their travel and no hotel rooms available, they spent two nights sleeping in the airport.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Northern store employee who went out of her way to assist these travellers. They purchased food for them to eat, and she had a room available for herself, but when she attempted for them to stay with her they were denied so she stayed and spent the night with them at the airport to make sure they felt safe. This is heartwarming.

Mr. Speaker, another medical service which relies on air routes is the provision of proficient pharmacy supplies. It is my understanding that the medication that needs to be shipped to Gjoa Haven is sent from Cambridge Bay, where there is only one flight per week between the two communities. It has been brought to my attention that one person ran out of medication due to this situation, and they ended up in hospital.

It would make much more sense if the Department of Health could arrange for medication to be shipped from Yellowknife, which has more regular air service to our community. Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Department of Health to look more closely at air traffic routing in the Kitikmeot when organizing medical services delivery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members statement, member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

### **Member's Statement 658 – 6(2): Issues with Medical Travel**

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about medical travel patients. It looks like the situation got better after we got elected, but now it looks like we're back to the old problems. There's problems that keep coming out again, and we've been notified and witnessed ourselves. Like as an elected MLA, you get told all sorts of things, especially about medical travel patients, medical travel. Some people get notified one hour or even less than an hour before they have to leave on their flight that they have to go to the hospital. That really needs to be corrected. I would really like to hear from the government, and at question period I will have questions on the matter, just to give you a heads up. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

### **Item 6: Oral Questions**

#### **Oral Question 965 – 6(2): Airport Infrastructure**

**Ms. Killiktee (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Nunavut and in my constituencies.

I rise today on behalf of my constituents to make sure that the decisions we made here are implemented. I would like to ask some more questions as to what else we're supposed to do when nothing is being done. Mr. Speaker, this is directed to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation and they concern the issue of airport infrastructure. As the minister will recall, he tabled the Nunavut Airports 20-Year Capital Needs Assessment Update in March 2023.

(interpretation ends) This important document identified a number of improvements that need to be made to the airports in both Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River. A specific issue that was recently raised by me by residents of Clyde River concerns the lack of a power generator at the airport.

As the minister will appreciate, it is essential that airport runway lights and other critical safety features have an uninterrupted supply of power, even during the community outages. Will the minister commit to reviewing the situation at both Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq airports? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, we can have them reviewed. I can have them reviewed and the money that is approved in the House and the money we get from the federal government, they are a proposal. We request for funding to do those kind of work. I will be able to get further information at a later time, after I look into it.

Whenever we hear concerns from the communities we try to do something about them. I agree with the member that the airport lights need to be on all the time, because that's the only way we can go to different communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your response. It's our communities. We know our communities. We know what is needed, what are the problems and when support is needed from government. Thank you for your response.

Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) the Nunavut Airports 20-Year Capital Needs Assessment Update report indicates that there are legacy assets in both communities. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that work has been undertaken to remove the old airport terminal building up in Clyde River. Can the minister confirm the total cost of this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 129,000. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker; and thank you for your prompt response. I like that. 129,000.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the community of Qikiqtarjuaq is very excited about the deep water seaport that is planned to be constructed in my community. We are expecting that the community will be experiencing an influx of workers materials over the next few years as this project gets underway. Can the minister describe what work his department has undertaken to ensure that the airport is able to handle the increased volume of passengers and cargo traffic? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as part of that project, one of the critical things that we're doing is looking at the community as a whole and what supports will be needed further, extra fuel tanks, do we need to extend the runways. All that is being considered and reviewed as we speak. I don't have a determination what the volumes would be, but that work is being done, as part of that major project that is taking place right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Tununig, Ms. Nutarak.

#### **Oral Question 966 – 6(2): Departmental Positions**

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment. As the minister is aware, the Department of Environment has a total of seven positions located in Pond Inlet. The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that three of these positions are filled and four are vacant. Can the minister confirm which positions are currently vacant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Member, for the questions. Mr. Speaker, the research section that is located in Pond Inlet, the regional biologist was filled in September 2024. The wildlife technician is currently vacant and the competition was closed, unsuccessfully.



Mr. Speaker, the environmental protection officer and the finance position in Pond Inlet are also vacant. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary. Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm not sure if those were three or four. I'll get back to you on that.

If the minister will recall, he recently replied to my correspondence to him on this subject and I thank him for keeping my office up to date on the department's progress. Can the minister describe what the specific challenge is his department is currently facing in filling its vacant positions in Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, very much Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Member, for the question. Mr. Speaker, across the entire government we can know that in any department one of the biggest challenges is housing allocation. That's one of the areas we are working as a government to find, to build new staff housing units for our Government of Nunavut employees. The Nunavut 3000 with Nunavut Housing Corporation is doing an excellent work on that area. We are diligently working with Human Resources to get more housing for each community in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister. As the minister is aware, Pond Inlet is proud of the number residents who have completed the environmental technology program at the Nunavut Arctic College. We have offered it in the community three times and have very successful graduates. Can the minister describe what efforts the Department of Environment makes to match graduates of this program with available positions in this department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Member, for a very good question. I took myself once an environmental technology program. I am myself a graduate of that program. It's one of the greatest programs in Nunavut. I recommend anyone to take that program.

Mr. Speaker, within the Department of Environment we do encourage environmental technology program graduates to seek employment with the Department of Environment. We have various different vacant positions with Department of Environment, whether its wildlife operations, wildlife research division, environmental protection division, and

also the parks division that we can employ for the community, specifically for Pond Inlet. But we're doing our very best to find Government of Nunavut employee graduates from Nunavut Arctic College. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

**Oral Question 967 – 6(2): Staff Housing Policy**

**Ms. Quassa (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions (interpretation ends) Today are for the minister of human resources. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on questions that my colleague from Iqaluit-Tasiluk asked yesterday concerning the government's staff housing policy. It has come to my attention that there appeared to be an increasing number of situations where long-term Inuit employees of the government find themselves homeless after they retire and vacate their staff housing units. For employees living outside of the capital city, there are often no private housing options, and the waiting list for public housing units are years in length. Can the minister indicate if her department has started to look into how it can address this emerging issue. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. The Department of Human Resources is in a position of ensuring that staff housing is, first of all, available, but also working to support those two are looking to retire ahead of time and moving them into public housing and we're working with the department of housing to ensure that we have a plan for those people. I know there are certain sectors where people may be employed for a really long time and are not retiring in fear of losing their staff housing unit, and we don't want that to be the case, so we're ensuring that they are and they know that they are going to be retiring, to work with their director or supervisor to ensure that we come up with a plan for them to switch over their unit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know you responded to some of my question. However, we have not seen any.

(interpretation ends) I recognize understand that the government's limited supply of staff housing units need to be used for housing employees who are providing services to Nunavummiut. However, I believe that we need to give consideration to the situation faced by long-term Inuit employees. They cannot simply move out of the territory and I have already noted that there may not be any private housing options in the smaller communities especially, outside of the capital city.

Will the minister commit and hopefully move faster to working with the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation to explore ways of giving people in such situations priority, consideration for available public housing units? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I can commit to that as we are working on it currently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the minister that you are working in this.

(interpretation ends) The government's current staff housing policy was last updated in April 2019, over half a decade ago. As the minister is aware, her department's current business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the current 2024-2025 fiscal year is to update the policy. Can the minister indicate what major changes to the policy are being actively considered? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Human Resources, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. In terms of the staff housing policy, right now we do have a very limited stock, and so we're working to ensure that more houses for staff housing are built, and we continue to collaborate with the Nunavut Housing Corporation on the delivery of staff housing. So with that, our policy is limited at this time, due to the number of vacant units. As of August 12 of this year there were only 167 vacant units for staff housing, and in addition, 48 of these were needing repairs and renovations.

And with that, we look forward to more staff housing becoming available so that we can have more Inuit direct appointed into positions and more staff housing available to fill positions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet. Mr. Sammurtok.

### **Oral Question 968 – 6(2): Follow-Up on Chesterfield Inlet Group Home**

**Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation:** Good afternoon, Chesterfieldmmit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services. Mr. Speaker, I would like to follow up on my earlier line of requesting. I know the Request For Proposals to operate the Chesterfield Inlet group home has been extended until November 8. There has been several addendum to the original document. Can the minister provide an overview of what specific services will be delivered at the facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation:** Thank you. Thank you for the question. The request for proposal, there was no proponents that bid on the work. The roof needs work and we will be able to identify what it will be used for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary. Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question was answered, but (interpretation ends) I'm going to go ahead anyway.

Mr. Speaker, in response to my earlier questions, the minister indicated that some major repairs must be done to the group home building at this time. Can the minister provide further details on what specific repairs are necessary and whether she can anticipate that the process of these repairs will be completed in time for the facility to re-open in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. As I mentioned, the roof needs work. I don't know the specific completion date. I will be able to provide further information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I raised this issue earlier, the minister indicated that she would be looking into options for previous workers at the group home to fill in positions at the facility. Can the minister clarify whether she will be working with successful applicant of the request for proposal to ensure that the locally trained workers will have opportunities for employment in the newly opened group home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you once again. The previous employees that worked at Pimaksirvik, they are going to review as

they are educated. It would be for and try to find staff for the facility if they are looking at working in this group home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa Ms. Brewster.

### **Oral Question 969 – 6(2): Alternative and Renewable Energy Generation**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation. I would like to express my appreciation for and pay deep tribute to the hard working front-line staff of that corporation, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that the minister has noted the recent public attention paid to the news about the Nunavut Nukkiksautiit Corporation's hydro energy project near Iqaluit. I fully recognize that this is another megaproject that will take time and significant resources to develop. The concept of this entity generating clean hydro electricity and selling it to the Qulliq Energy Corporation to power our community is very intriguing. Can the minister provide an overview today of how the Qulliq Energy Corporation is collaborating with the project proponent on this initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question. Qulliq Energy Corporation supports renewable energy initiatives that reduce fuel consumption and mitigate our carbon footprint, or reduce it. QEC is interested in purchasing clean energy, and we are aware of hydro-electric development efforts in the territory. In June 2024, the Qulliq Energy board approved developing a draft partnership agreement and a draft power purchase agreement with Nunavut Nukkiksautiit Corporation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for sharing that information.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in solidarity with my colleagues representing the communities of Chesterfield Inlet, Kugaaruk and Igloolik, all of which are in need of new power plants. They have all been told that the Qulliq Energy Corporation simply does not have the dollars with which to construct new plants.

Mr. Speaker, the potential cost of the Iqaluit clean energy project has been estimated at being in the range of half-a-billion dollars. That's billion with a capital B, Mr. Speaker.

The project proponent is a subsidiary of the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, which is in itself an arm of the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. News reports indicate that this status may enable

the entity to access significantly greater amounts of capital than that is available to the Qulliq Energy Corporation alone.

Can the minister indicate the extent to which the Qulliq Energy Corporation is working with similar entities in other regions to access capital funding to develop alternative ways of accessing financing to construct new power generating infrastructure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It's a really interesting and deep question, and I'm really going to have to cut myself short here in terms of my response.

Yes, it appears to Qulliq Energy Corporation that this is an area that is developing right across the country, in terms of Indigenous-owned infrastructure, whether its transmission or whether it's generation, infrastructure in terms of electricity. So as well as working with Nunavut Nukkiksautiit Corp., we are working with another Nukkik-titled corporation, and that's the one heading up the Kivalliq hydro fibre link project. And so it is exciting work.

We do see a strong alignment between the interest of Qulliq Energy Corporation to have clean, reliable, affordable power for our customers, as well as the business interests, whether they're in things like the Ikayuut project in Naujaat, whether it's the Nukkiksautiit wind turbine project in Sanikiluaq or these larger projects like Iqaluit hydro or Kivalliq HYDRO link. It's exciting work and we are keenly seeking to advance things with partners. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If that was a short answer I really look forward to further discussion on this issue.

>>*Laughter*

An issue that a number of other members have spoken about during this assembly is the potential for small modular nuclear reactors to be deployed in Nunavut. I recognize that nuclear energy has been a source of controversy, an ongoing source of controversy for a number of years, and I absolutely emphasize the need for informed community consent being granted to prior to any such projects moving forward. I think that goes without saying.

Mr. Speaker, the most recent cabinet portfolio shuffle designated the Minister of Environment as also being the minister responsible for energy. Can the minister for Qulliq Energy Corporation clearly indicate which portfolio has ultimate responsibility in respect to such matters as the potential adoption of nuclear energy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of that question around the portfolios and who's the lead on nuclear technology, I will have to consult with my colleague and seek to clarify this at a later date. Qulliq Energy Corporation remains in the information-gathering stage when it comes to the viability of micro modular reactors in Nunavut and we are looking at things like costs, community acceptance, safety data, and environmental assessments.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to note a small modular reactor, as I understand it, would be something in the neighbourhood of 100 megawatts, which is enough to power the whole territory, so we would be particularly interested in the micro reactors, which would be in the 5 megawatt range. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

#### **Oral Question 970 – 6(2): Devolution Agreement / Mining Property Taxes**

**Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Arviummiut, good day.

(interpretation ends) My questions are for the premier and they concern the issue of devolution. I want begin by clearly stating that it is a matter of record that the Government of Nunavut is owed millions of dollars in unpaid territorial property taxes associated with a major mining operation in this region. We need every penny of revenue we can get to fund our programs, our service, our infrastructure plans and maybe our elder vans. Does the premier agree that all territorial property taxes associated with mining operations in Nunavut should be paid? Yes or no?

**Speaker:** Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation:** Thank you. Thank you for the member. I totally agree with him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I was at the signing of the Devolution Agreement, too, and there was lots of show and it was a nice time. We were

all happy, including myself, as it was quite a monumental moment for of Nunavut. But then you get to read the agreement and get into the details and a few other things come out that you didn't know about.

Under article 4.3 of the Nunavut Lands and Resource Development Agreement it talks about members of the working group and this is to deal with the money that is owed the property taxes that are owed to the government.

I would like to ask the premier who is in this working group. Can we name the people in the working group? Have they met yet? How many times have they met to date. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. I can state yes, I too was very excited about devolution and the signing ceremony that we had. We had worked hard. As he mentioned, the contents under 4.2, they have met once to date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear the first part of my question. I asked the premier who is in this working group. I thank the premier for letting me know they met once, but we don't know if it's one person, or two persons, or three person. The House deserves to know who is on this working group.

Mr. Speaker, I assume that the GN negotiators are acting under the direction of the premier in the working group. Can he ensure this House that the government will not forgive a penny of the property taxes owing to Nunavummiut that desperately need the money in the situation that we are? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I thank my colleague for that question. Devolution does fall under the purview of the premier, and as such, the officials that sit on that fall with the senior officials within that division. I had indicated there are several questions in that last one, so I did answer one of those questions. I could assure the member that the chief negotiator sits in as an official of that committee.

And to the member's last question, yes, I can't pre-determine any outcomes of those conversations, but under section 4.3, it is without prejudice and I very much look forward to those conversations to see where those could go. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

**Oral Question 971 – 6(2): Education Staffing Issues**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, it has been brought to my attention that a number of school principals in the Kivalliq region have had difficulties getting answers about their school situations due to a lack of capacity at the Kivalliq school operations office. Can the minister provide an update on which positions are still vacant at the Kivalliq school operations office and what measures are in place to ensure that school principals can get the answers this they need when they need them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you to the member for the question. That's a detailed question on positions that are vacant. I'll have to ask the department which exact positions are vacant in the Kivalliq region and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the commitment to get back to me.

Mr. Speaker, during one of our Standing Committee hearings a previous deputy minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs stated that the Government of Nunavut was losing net 1.6 employees per day in the summer of 2023. The most recent public service employment report from June 2024 shows that the Department of Education was at 79 per cent capacity. The situation may be different now, now that the school year has begun. Again, a capacity question issue: Can the minister provide an update on how many school teaching positions are currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. In terms of vacancies, to the member's previous question, we have two SOS positions that are at reference state at the moment. And in terms of teachers that are vacant, we do have a vacancy of 82 per cent, I believe, at this point, or sorry filled at 82 per cent.

We do have substitutes and teaching positions are filled if there are vacancies, so we do have people either on letter of authority or substitutes filling in for some of the vacancies

that are there. We are working to always recruit and retain educators and yet we have 773.5 teaching positions filled at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for getting back to me so quickly on my first question there.

Mr. Speaker, it has been noted when the department has been unable to fill teaching positions with qualified teachers, individuals may be hired to teach under letters of authority from the minister. Clearly this is not an ideal solution, but it is hopefully a temporary measure to ensure that our students are receiving instruction in class.

Can the minister provide further information on how many individuals are currently teaching in Nunavut schools under letters of authority and whether this situation is impacted by the lack of capacity at the regional school operations office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member. I would like to make one slight correction. Our capacity is at 84 per cent. The 82 per cent was while I was getting updates prior to session starting, so our numbers have gone up a little bit, which is always great to see.

For the present question that he just asked, Mr. Speaker, we have 49 teachers as of October 9 for this academic school year that are on letters of authority. He also asked if it's due to lack of staff, and I would argue and say no. We have had a decrease in letter of authority teachers from 2023-2024. We had 74 letters of authority, and this year we have 49.

And so with that, the specifics for the Kivalliq in 2023-2024, there were 21 on letters of authority, and this school year there are 22. So it has gone up just a little bit but not very much. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

#### **Oral Question 972 – 6(2): Medical Travel Concerns (Quqqiaq)**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, I raise this issue on behalf of residents of the Kitikmeot region, but it may also be an issue that affects other regions as well. Mr. Speaker, it occurs far too often that an individual is advised of medical travel, but when they have to travel through Yellowknife, the connecting flights are not booked and they miss their appointments.

Mr. Speaker, this situation can greatly increase the stress an individual is going through, especially when they are facing such a serious diagnosis as the advanced stages of cancer. Mr. Speaker, when the person tries to contact the medical travel office, they do not always get the assistance that they need.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify why there are so many issues whether it comes to booking flights and connecting flights to ensure the Kitikmeot travellers can get to their appointments on time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker; and thank you to my colleague for asking those questions. Now, whenever there's a problem or if something doesn't work right and they try to see, we don't always know what the reasons are for the problems, and when there are problems and people complain we do investigate as to what happened or what was the reason.

I want to respond properly to my colleague, but there are different reasons that could result in complaints and we never know right off the hand.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, there are a number of different things that can impact medical travel. Of course there's the weather. There's flight cancellations. We're dealing with the lack of accommodations in Yellowknife. The Department of Health is committed to ensuring a smooth, comfortable travel experience for all our clients and it's sad to hear about issues, particularly cancer patients might be facing and our staff do make efforts to accommodate, to take care of travellers as best they can. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what specific case has been brought to my attention where an individual paid out of their own pocket for themselves and their escort to attend an appointment with the oncologist to address a very serious cancer diagnosis because the Department of Health again failed to book their travel and accommodation.

Mr. Speaker, that person ended up paying over \$9,000 of their own funds for medical travel and accommodation. The financial stress in addition to concerns for the health status is very concerning.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm whether he is aware of this case, and if so, what steps has he taken to address the issue and make sure this individual is reimbursed?  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I'm not going to get into discussing individual cases here in the House. You know, I do thank the member for raising this case. I believe it's one that is currently being looked into. The Office of Patient Relations has an important role. We encourage Nunavummiut to bring their issues to the Office of Patient Relations. Unfortunately we are still seeing -- I'm not talking about this individual case but the system as a whole. We see people complaining to Facebook. I'm not monitoring Facebook and taking things off Facebook and going and investigating them, but I can tell you that when complaints or issues are brought through the proper channels they are investigated and they are acted upon.

Of course I'm not speaking about this individual case, but this is kind of a systemic thing that we are encountering. There's more awareness about patient relations than there has been in the past, and we continue to advise Nunavummiut there's a toll-free number. You can speak in English. You can speak in Inuktitut. You can also fill out a form.

The toll-free number is (855)438-3003. I encourage Nunavummiut to bring issues to those skilled staff at that house. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am sure the minister and his officials are working very hard on the medical travel file, and I commend the minister for succeeding in his efforts to access funding from Indigenous Services Canada under the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide further detail on whether any of the additional federal funding will be allocated to increasing capacity at the medical travel offices and providing additional training and funding, additional work hours for the staff in those offices? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) There are components of some federal pots that we have access to, such as the Territorial Investment Fund, that are going towards improving capacity within the Department of Health for things like our information unit. But in terms of directing investments into the medical travel staffing side of things, I thank the member and his colleagues for

supporting earlier on in this government a significant increase in medical travel clerk staffing at the community level, and that is something that is benefitting Nunavummiut. It is helping us to keep up with the volume, which is, you know, close to 50,000. We're now close to 50,000 trips in the last fiscal year, which is significant.

I encourage Nunavummiut to raise issues through the Office of Patient Relations when they do arise. We are committed to continually improving the medical travel program, which is highlighted through our ongoing review of the policy and the program. There's a public survey that's on our website. I encourage Nunavummiut to share their opinions and their experiences with us. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Kugluktuk. Mr. Anavilok.

### **Oral Question 973 – 6(2): Kitikmeot Inuit Association 2024 Annual General Meeting**

**Mr. Anavilok (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Culture and Heritage and they concern the resolutions passed during the Kitikmeot Inuit Association's 2024 annual general meeting in Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week my colleague member for Netsilik tabled the resolutions passed at the Kitikmeot Inuit Association's recent 2024 annual general meeting. Mr. Speaker, one of the youth resolutions indicates that there is a "need for youth centres to have safe and adequate space to deliver programs in all the Kitikmeot communities."

Can the minister clearly explain what funding resources are available from his department to support these resolutions. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, member, for the very good question. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be very honest. I have not had the time to review the resolution that was tabled by the member from Netsilik, but, Mr. Speaker, I will commit to getting back to the member the funding sources available within my department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the department issued a second call for proposal for its grants and contributions funding for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, the deadline to apply is December 15, 2024. I encourage my constituents in Kitikmeot groups to consider applying for these contributions.

Can the minister indicate when his department will be reviewing these applications and when successful applicants will be informed of their approved applications.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you member for the very good question. Mr. Speaker, since October 2024 my department has successfully allocated 94 per cent of its grants and contribution budget. There is still funding available for elders and youth committees, elders facilities and language-related initiatives. Although we are issuing a second callout for applicants, I encourage the to contact grants and contribution officers for their support in accessing these available funds.

Mr. Speaker, on October 25 the Department of Culture and Heritage did a second callout for the territory of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the department's current business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the April to October 25 period is to "plan and deliver a grant and contribution session in an identified community."

Mr. Speaker, the resolutions passed indicates that many Kitikmeot community members have identified the need for more programs that the department funds through its grants and contributions programs. Will the minister commit to delivering this grants and contributions session in one of the Kitikmeot communities? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the very good question. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Culture and Heritage does community visits to promote the grants and contributions. I do have a list of community visits, but I'm not going to every community where the Department of Culture and Heritage went to the communities. Our next visit is in November 2024 is to the community of Resolute Bay.

To the member's question, yes, I can commit to ensuring my department visits all the communities. The Department of Culture and Heritage was recently in Kugluktuk, and we encourage every community to reach out to the Department of Culture and Heritage to access grants and contribution funds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerk.

**Oral Question 974 – 6(2): Elementary School in Sanirajak**

**Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Amittummiut. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Community and Government Services minister. I had intended to, but I'll redirect my question to the Minister of Education concerning the learning centre in Hall Beach. The building is quite old now. The water tank and part of the building has been leaking. Could the minister describe if any remediation has taken place? Or renovation?

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Can he please clarify if it's for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College on the community learning centre? That's what I heard through interpretation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Mr. Amittuq, please clarify.

**Mr. Kaernerk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was talking about the Ataguttaaluk school, due to the conditions where they had a leakage on the water tank and one of the classroom had a leakage on the ceiling. I just want to get information if these have been worked on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross (interpretation):** Thank you for the clarification, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for asking the question. In terms of the condition of the water tank, it's still in the same condition as it was, and the hamlet is working, when they do fill up the water tank, to not fill it all the way, due to a crack in the water tank. In terms of the leakage in the building, I will ask the department to make sure that they look into the matter after hearing about it.

We have had some requests to ensure that health and safety issues were addressed to the Ataguttaaluk school in Igloolik, and some repairs have been completed, but we do know that there needs to be more repairs done in the future and are looking to secure funding

and have funding requests out there or looking to have funding requests submitted to do additional repairs to the school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Minister, for your response. It's unfortunate that you cannot fill the tank. (interpretation ends) Can the minister give me information when the water tank will be fixed? Is it going to be this summer? Next year? Can the minister clarify on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. So this past year, last December we had a condition rating done on the building and we had allocated funds to address health and safety issues to the building that were immediate. We have a number of completions that have been done for the maintenance of the building.

In terms of the water tank and getting a new one, I know that will have to come through the Community and Government Services for capital. I'll make sure to ask the department on the timeline and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you that the minister will return my question. You answered part of my question.

With respect to the funds you mentioned, would the building probably be closed due to the part of the school is not adequate? And in view of safety being priority, with the tank leaking it is probably causing mold and probably unsafe. Has that been looked into by the Department of Education? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Department of Education, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you to the member for the question. We are working to ensure that the school has no days of closure, that the work is done outside of the school and hours of operation and they have done the work during the summer months.

For the water tank specifically, and causing issues, there are none that I know of at this point, but if there are, I will be sure to let the member know, but none have been brought to my attention so far, as it has been operating and working for the school.



I can assure to the member that we are looking for outside funds to further renovate the school and do more repairs to the school as the ones that we just did were the critical maintenance repairs. But we do know that there are more repairs that need to be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Oral Question 975 – 6(2): Inuktitut-Speaking Teachers**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are also for the Minister of Education, regarding Inuktitut-speaking teachers in our education system.

Mr. Speaker, in February 2024 I tabled a document containing information that was provided by the Department of Education on the number of educators in Nunavut schools during the 2023-2024 academic year who received language allowance based on their proficiency in Inuktitut. To summarize the information in the table, it does not look very promising. Of the 800 filled teacher positions, less than 30 per cent of those teachers have been receiving Inuktitut bilingual bonus.

But, Mr. Speaker, what was most concerning of all was the fact that four of our schools did not have any teachers receiving the Inuktitut bilingual bonus, and those schools were in Iqaluit, École des Trois-Soleils, Resolute Bay's Qarmartalik school, Naujaat's Tuugaalik high school, and Kugluktuk high school.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in the week I was able to praise the minister of resources on her uncanny ability to pull statistical information when I asked questions about home work and telework, and I look forward to the opportunity to praise the Minister of Education when I ask this upcoming question.

Mr. Speaker I would like to ask the Minister of Education if she would be able to provide us with an update on the status and the currently level of teachers in our education system who are receiving Inuktitut bilingual bonus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Overall, the Department of Education as of September 30, 2024, our department has 590.76 Inuit employees, or 52 per cent Inuit representation. I can say, Mr. Speaker, that our Inuit employment has increased slightly over the past two years, and when previous in March 2022 was at 48 per cent and March 2021 it was alternate 47 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of our Inuit educators, we currently base our numbers off of those collecting bilingual bonus. At this point we have 277 Inuit educators and we have 238 Inuktitut-

speaking educators across our 45 schools. They're either level 3, we have 218; level 2, 13; and level 1, 7.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that we look forward to these numbers increasing, as this year we just hired 25 NTEP graduates into the Department of Education across the territory, and 12 of those were recent graduates of the program.

Based on information from the Nunavut Arctic College, we anticipate 12 new NTEP graduates to come through for the next school year. So we hope that our numbers will steadily increase with the recruitment and retention and the graduates coming out of that program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand here today to praise the Minister of Education on her excellent opportunity to provide that information. Mr. Speaker, this is excellent news to learn about the recent graduates of NTEP, as well as the 12 graduates that just graduated and were hired and the upcoming 12 grads. That will lead us towards our bilingual education goals.

Mr. Speaker, when Bill 25 was introduced in the previous Assembly, in 2019, the public criticized the bill, the legislation for not being ambitious enough with the final timeline for the final phase and for grade 12 in 2039. However, Mr. Speaker, the first timeline or deadline for grade 4 is coming up. That is approaching in less than two years.

As that legislative timeline is fast approaching, I would like to ask what targets have been established to meet the legislative timeline, and more importantly, is the Department of Education on track to meet the July 1, 2026 deadline? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Our department has travelled with the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities to 24 out of 25 of our communities across the territory to talk about the language of instruction models, and we're looking to get to the final community very soon. And then we are starting our second round of consultations for the language models and hope to come back by next July with a plan for the language of instruction models.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we do have a lot of work to do, but we are on track with curriculum development and the department has worked to ensure that we get even better than the 2039 goals, and are looking to anticipate to 2036. So we've increased our timeline for curriculum development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the minister's response. Mr. Speaker, returning back to my first comments, one of the alarming aspects was the fact that there were four communities that did not have any teachers receiving Inuktitut bilingual bonus, Mr. Speaker, one of those schools being here in Iqaluit where we're one of the communities that are unfortunately suffering from language loss.

In the document which I tabled last year, of the 134 teaching positions in Iqaluit, only 23 had been receiving Inuktitut bilingual bonus, only 17 per cent of our teachers here in Iqaluit. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, that one school in Iqaluit that doesn't have a teacher receiving Inuktitut bonus and that's the École des Trois-Soleils.

I would like to ask the minister, as the *Education Act* provides Commission scolaire francophone shall determine the manner in which it gives effect to the Inuktitut language requirements, and the curriculum shall promote fluency in the Inuktitut language. I would like to ask, can the minister clarify what direction has been given to the commission scolaire francophone with respect to the education program, and specifically with respect to provision in Inuktitut language instruction? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. The École des Trois-Soleils has no Inuktitut-language teachers at the moment, but we do highly encourage them to hire if available, and hopefully they will have teachers in the near future that do speak Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

### **Oral Question 976 – 6(2): Seniors' Strategy Action Plan**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister responsible for Seniors. Mr. Speaker the Elders and Senior Strategy was tabled March 7 earlier this year, over eight months ago. Will the associated action plan be tabled during the current sitting? And if not, why not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation):** Thank you. I thank the member for the question. We are proud of the strategy and the recent weeks we have been working on an implementation plan and the components and that is currently where we are. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to belabour the recent dialogue on the five vans purchased without a usage policy established, but I can't help to wonder how long they will be sitting there unused until the legal requirements of use are met. What other action items are posed to be met or initiated this fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for bringing up a very good question in terms of what are we doing. I have been working very closely with all of my colleagues here. It really had required us to take a whole of government approach. Right now I was very pleased to launch the program of the van which I know we are not getting into, but there are some really exciting initiatives that are taking shape with all other departments, whether it's with Health for example where we're increasing potentially the visits of family members for members that are outside of care, among other things. There's a lot of really exciting work that's starting to happen.

But we just passed the implementation strategy that's going to guide our work, and I very much support to providing updates to the members as we progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to get caught up on wording, but it's not an implementation strategy, it's just a strategy. The action will be the implementation portion of it.

As the minister is aware, or should be aware, having a strategy without an action plan makes it very difficult to measure progress and outcomes. Can the minister tell us today what commitments are being prioritized for implementation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I thank my colleague for that question. As I had indicated, it really has taken us a whole of government approach, so every department has action items that have been identified. We have been working very closely with each minister to see the full implementation of the work that we're hoping to do.

Another clear one I did want to bring up as well is looking at how we could expand potentially home care, and I know the member had pushed that before as well. So we are looking at a lot of different initiatives that have been identified by elders.

At this point in time, we just passed it few weeks ago, and as the action items and the business planning and the items that are identified start rolling out, I will be sure to share with the members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral questions. Member for and Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

**Oral Question 977 – 6(2): Planning for Medical Travel**

**Mr. Malliki:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, I have noted that almost every time questions about health medical travel is raised in this House, the minister assures us that the medical travel program and its policies are under review. It is certainly very good that the program is under constant review; however, the problems also seems to be constant. In fact, it seems that some issues are normalized to the point where people are just expected to accept the level of service when it comes to medical travel.

Without referring to the ongoing review of the medical travel program, can the minister clarify how his department addressed the complaints and concerns of relations that are raised by Nunavut residents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for raising the fact that the medical travel program is under review. It's a program in the policy. They work together. So it's not just the policy that we're reviewing, we're also looking at the structure of the program in terms of where do we need staff, do we have enough resources in certain areas. We aren't waiting for the review to be complete in order to make improvements.

We are continually trouble-shooting, working on our airline partners in terms of ways that they can help us to make improvements, whether it's changes to timing of flights, in terms of making connections through Rankin Inlet, and the example of Naujaat and Coral Harbour, or whether we can make adjustments to how we operate within the department. One recent example is with regards to return travel from Winnipeg back into the Kivalliq region. We are now going to be having the itineraries or the travel bookings made in Winnipeg, by our staff in Winnipeg, and that is a return to an approach which was used successfully in prior years. We are quite excited about increasing efficiencies. That's one example. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplement, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, Minister. I have spoken with the minister for medical travel and for the communities that they too can create efficiencies for the people that travel from the communities.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, medical clients from both communities in my constituency have raised concern about the timing of the notification from the Department of Health's travel team. It has become the norm for patients to be notified only 15 minutes before the flight that they have a ticket to travel to their medical appointment. If the airport is 10 kilometres away from the community, it takes 20 minutes to get there. If the medical client misses their flight, they often get bumped down to the bottom of the list of those awaiting appointments.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify why the medical travel department gives such a short notice to medical travellers while their flight is being booked for medical travel? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I thank the member for raising those issues again. In terms of short notice before flights, the example the member gave, that's clearly not acceptable and it shouldn't be normalized. There could be cases where, and we've discussed this previously here in the House, where bookings are made at the last minute, and that's in order to get a client to specialized care as soon as possible. But it should not be normalized, and we do want to establish standard operating procedures and that is, I'll have to apologize, it's part of the medical travel policy and program review that's ongoing.

We want to establish standard procedures for the program and for our staff so that we can, in the case of notification, so that our clients will be given enough advance time to take leave from their jobs, to prepare for childcare. We know that it can be quite burdensome to go for medical travel. It's an area that we know needs improvement and it's one we are committed to working on. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes people who have gone to the hospital down south have no idea how long they are going to have to be down south. That depends on what kind of problem they have, health problem they have. Sometimes they have to spend a long time down south, and as the minister stated, the patients have to make arrangements if they're going to be gone for a long time. So it's good that they will be reviewed properly.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am not exaggerating when I talk about the extremely short timing of medical travel notification. I was with a constituent when they got a call

from medical travel. I witnessed the fact that they were given five minutes to catch their flight, that there was no time to pack, or make arrangements for while they were gone. This seems very unreasonable.

Will the minister commit to address these issues immediately and ensure that the steps are taken to improve the quality of planning for medical travel clients so they receive medical notification with enough time to prepare themselves and get to the airport on time to make their flights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of the commitment that's being requested of me, I believe the department is already committed to addressing this. Another area that we are looking at improving, we're looking at how we can improve, is the communication tools that we use. Right now most times a medical traveller is required to physically come into the health centre in Nauyasat, for example, to pick up their paper itinerary or their package before they go and travel. So we're looking at digital tools that could be used in terms of providing that information to clients. We're also looking at things like notifications that Canadian North, for example, currently using a notification system where you will get a text message reminding you that your flight is 24 hours away, you're now suppose to do check into your flight. So it's things like that we're looking for ways to improve so we are communicate better, reduce the no-shows on our medical travel scheduled flights, as well as improve the experience for clients. I thank the member for the question.

**Speaker:** Members be aware time allotted for question period is now over. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Returns to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Petitions. Item 11, Responses to Petitions. Item 12, Reports of Standing and Special Committee on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13, Tabling of Documents.

Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

### **Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 310 – 6(2): 2022-2023 Tourism Act Annual Report**

**Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I'm very glad to table the 2022-2023 Tourism Act Annual Report.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

#### **Tabled Document 311 – 6(2): 2024-2029 Inuusivut Anairnaqtut Action Plan**

**Hon. John Main (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the 2024-2025 Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

#### **Tabled Document 312 – 6(2): Nunavut Victims Services 2022-2023 Annual Report**

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Nunavut Victims Services 2022-2023 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Ms. Brewster.

#### **Tabled Document 313 – 6(2): Submissions to the Competition Bureau of Canada Concerning Competition**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened carefully yesterday to the Minister of Economic Development and in return to my oral question in which he confirmed that his department had made a submission earlier this year to the Competition Bureau of Canada. I had another look yesterday around the federal site and located some other submissions from northern entities, including the Northern Air Transport Association and Travel Nunavut. And for the benefit of my colleagues, I'm tabling a consolidated set of these submissions, which I encourage all members to review with care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of motions. Item 15, Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.



**Item 16: Motions**

**Hon. P.J. Akeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the government has further considered Bill 59, *An Act to Amend Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;

AND WHEREAS it has been determined that Bill 59 may have unintended consequences of the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and may impact the relationship between the Commissioner and the Government of Nunavut;

AND WHEREAS further policy review of the Bill is needed;

AND WHEREAS the government fully supports access to information and the rights of Nunavummiut to access government materials, and it's important to bring forth the best bill possible;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Cambridge Bay, that Bill 59, *An Act to Amend Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, be withdrawn from the order table. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. To the motion. Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I wish to make a few comments concerning this motion. It is my understanding that although rare, it is not unprecedented for bills to be removed from the order papers in this manner.

Earlier this year concerns were expressed that the government's legislative agenda was too light. This situation clearly illustrates that pitfalls of the government trying to introduce as many bills as possible without taking the necessary time to fully develop them and undertake necessary consultations prior to the introduction.

Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised of the fact that the chief justice had concern with this Bill. It's not mentioned in the motion.

As members are aware, a number of televised hearings have been held to review the annual reports from the Information and Privacy Commissioner. A number of Standing Committee recommendations have subsequently been made.

The committee encourages the government to take its time and reintroduce a bill during the upcoming winter sitting that reflects the recommendations that we have made and which reflect adequate consultation with appropriate parties.

If the bill is introduced in the spring sitting, that will allow us time in which to invite the Information and Privacy Commissioner to make a formal submission to the Standing Committee. We may then be in a position to pass amendments during the spring sitting, prior to devolution. Members of the Standing Committee will not be opposing this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** For the motion. My apologies, Premier, do you have any comments? Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for those comments and those concerns as well. My apologies, I believe I was going to speak first to the motion, so I apologize that I sat down earlier.

I just wanted to reiterate that while we consulted with the Information and Privacy Commissioner during the development of Bill 59, he had raised concerns that weren't provided enough information and we weren't clear enough regarding the scope of those amendments, and he had specific issues with the new powers provided to him which will allow him to appeal his decision to the Nunavut Court of Justice.

As I had mentioned, we are seeking the permission of the members to withdraw the bill from the order paper so we could work to address those concerns as raised by my colleague as well.

While we had hoped that the new powers provided to the office outlined in the bill would be a compromise that would allow us to build towards the order making power, we also want to make sure that the concerns that have been brought to us are taken seriously, and that we take our time to fully review the matters that are presented to us.

There are many needed amendments within this legislation, and this motion and rescinding will allow us to remove the parts of the bill that need further review and reintroduce the parts of the bill that are ready to be moved forward in a timely manner. And for that, I really appreciate the member in terms of those comments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** To the motion. I have no one else on my list. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 17, First Reading of Bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Hon. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

## Item 18: Second Reading of Bills

### Bill 60 – An Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act – Second Reading

**Hon. John Main (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)  
Seconded by the Hon. Member for Cambridge Bay, Bill 60, *An Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act* be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill amends the *Vital Statistics Act* to allow for a non-binary sex designation on birth registrations; allow for regulations to prescribe the requirements for applications to change the sex designation on a birth registration; allow the birth registration of children adopted in accordance with customary law to reflect both birth parents and adoptive parents; eliminate the registration of dissolution and annulments of marriage; provide for international divorces to be noted on Nunavut marriage registration; and modernized language. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The motion is in order. For the principle of the bill. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Legislation, I would like to make some remarks to the motion.

Mr. Speaker, the committee does not object to the principles of updating our legislation to reflect current societal structures and values in Nunavut.

Since the committee received the first legislative proposal respecting *An Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act*, there has been an exchange of correspondence with the minister's office.

The committee then received an amended legislative proposal, which addresses some of the issues raised by the committee and raised additional questions.

Mr. Speaker, less than 48 hours ago, 48 hours, the committee received further correspondence from the minister outlining a number of issues with the bill, and suggesting that additional amendments may be brought forward.

Mr. Speaker, there appears to be a number of unresolved issues with the proposed legislation that the department has not yet fully addressed. The minister's correspondence indicates that the legislation is still under development. Bringing the bill forward at this time seemed rushed. It would not be the best use of the committee's time to begin its work on reviewing legislation when the department is still trying to address issues and possibly amend certain aspects of the proposed legislation.

The committee has met to discuss Bill 60. Mr. Speaker, committee members will not be supporting the motion for a second reading of Bill 60 at this time. Thank you.

**Speaker:** To the motion. Minister of Health, Minister Main.

**Hon. John Main (interpretation:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am disappointed to hear we will not be getting support on second reading. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health is bringing this forward in order to amend the *Vital Statistics Act* because we want to avoid contravening other pieces of legislation.

In particular, the one that's the biggest concern for us is the *Human Rights Act*. And so the current *Vital Statistics Act* is potentially at odds with the *Human Rights Act*, and it also doesn't properly reflect provisions of the *Divorce Act*. And it also doesn't properly reflect provisions of Nunavut laws relating to adoptions, Mr. Speaker.

So this isn't a bill that the department feels is ready for consideration. It's disappointing that the committee members feel it doesn't warrant consideration at this point.

I feel the exchange of correspondence has been productive, and I guess the department will have to wait further information from the committee, in terms of when or what sorts of terms or needs need to be met in order for a future bill to get first and second reading, so that it can be passed over to the Standing Committee on legislation for their part of the job as legislators. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** To the motion. Those in favour of the motion. Those opposed to the motion, please raise your hands. Abstentions, please raise your hand. The motion has been defeated, and Bill 60 is removed from the order paper.

Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole to Bills and Other Matters. Bill 53, 54, 55 and 61 with Mr. Malliki in the chair. Before we proceed with the committee, we will take a 20 minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 15:37 and Committee resumed at 16:05*

### **Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters**

**Chairman (Mr. Malliki):** I would to call this committee to order. In the Committee of the Whole we have the following orders to deal with: Bill 54, 55, and 61. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chair. We wish to continue with the review of Bill 61, the *Appropriation (Capital) Act 2025-2026* and the supporting documents for the Department of Finance followed by Education and Health. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Are we in agreement we deal with Bill 61?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** I would like to ask Minister Kusugak, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee?

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** I do, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Does the committee agree to let the Minister's officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials and proceed your opening comments.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and colleagues. To my left is Mr. Suleiman, Comptroller General for Finance. To my right is Daniel Young, Deputy Minister of Finance.

Colleagues, I'm here to discuss the Department of Finance's request for \$1 million in capital funding in 2025-2026 to complete our work to replace the government's core financial and human resource software. If approved, this appropriation would add to the 40.55 million the Assembly has already approved through previous capital budgets. In total we continue to work within the project's original capital budget of \$41.55 million.

Oracle Fusion Cloud is a modern system that will provide our employees with the tools and technology to administer our government. The Department of Human Resources and Community and Government Services are co-leading this important initiative with the Department of Finance. The system itself will benefit and be used by all departments.

As planned, we will deploy the system in phases. We remain on track to launch of first modules in 2024-2025. Our first release focuses on core human-resource and financial functions. These modules support day-to-day activities, like managing employee records, supporting recruitment activities, paying invoices, receiving revenue, accounting for assets, and managing costs related to projects.

We reached an important milestone this week, Mr. Chairman. Our teams have started testing the system. Over the fall, employees across government will work together to kick the tires of our new system.

Working inside the system we have configured, our teams will methodically work through scenarios delivered based on the real-life work they do. By testing these systems they expect to identify defects. This is normal. Identifying defects allows us to work with Oracle to fix them before we fully adopt the new system. This exercise will lead to a better outcome. At the same time, we are documenting processes that we can put together helpful training for our teams.

There is still much to do and we do not wish to rush. This is a complex project, and it is important, we are aware, and comfortable with the risk before turning it on. If all goes well, however, we intend to cut over to the new system before the end of this fiscal year. This is a major undertaking and we are working hard to carefully plan out what this entails.

Even then, our project is not done. Our second release will happen later in 2025-2026. Our second release will focus on the pay-related modules. These are quite complex which is why we are tackling them last. We know how important it is to get this right.

Meanwhile, our team continues other work in support of the project. We have initiated a third-party review of how our internal procedures and processes help protect privacy. We continue to actively involve employees from across departments. This is very much a GN-wide effort.

We are reviewing and updating financial and human-resources directives to support modern operations. The GN has significant work ahead of us. We appreciate your support as we continue to move this project forward.

Thank you. My officials and I are available to answer your questions, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you, Minister. Does the chair of the Standing Committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair I'm pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee of Oversight of Operations and Public Accounts on its review of the proposed 2025-2026 capital estimates of the Department of Finance.

The department's proposed capital budget for the 2025-2026 is \$1 million. This represents the final year of a four-year process to procure the government's new fusion cloud enterprise resource planning system platform.

Mr. Chair, on April 13, 2022 the department issued a request for proposals for its new enterprise resource planning system. The Legislative Assembly approved 15.131 million in capital funding for this project for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, \$17.363 million for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and \$8.056 million for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Mr. Chairman and members, \$18.4 million in funding for this project was carried over during the recent 2024 sitting of the House. The department's substantiation sheet for this project indicates that it will replace the government's current financial and human resources systems. However, the extent to which public agencies and territorial corporations, including the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the Qulliq Energy Corporation, and Nunavut Arctic College will utilize the proposed new system remains unclear.

In light of recent problems associated with the financial management operations at the Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services, members encouraged the government to prioritize deployment of the new platform to this entity at the earliest practicable opportunity. The Standing Committee again notes that the scope of this project has been expanding.

Mr. Chairman and members, in its response to a recommendation contained in the auditor general's recent report on COVID-19 vaccines, the Department of Health indicates that it will "work with the other Government of Nunavut departments on the design of the human resource modules within the newly procured enterprise resource planning system. Module deployment is scheduled for the fall of 2024. The system will track the completion of orientation and training programs for health care staff, monitor whether their licences and certifications are up to date, and provide regular reports of overdue training and expired licences or certifications."

Mr. Chairman and members the Standing Committee looks forward to ongoing updates on the roll-out of the platform. Although the Standing Committee recognizes the importance of the government having functional accounting systems and financial applications, members continue to caution the department to be mindful of the importance of ensuring that the cost and complexity of such systems and applications are appropriate to the government's size and human resource capacity.

Mr. Chairman and members, this concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2025-2026 capital estimates of the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation:** Thank you, (interpretation ends) Mr. Hickes. Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? I see none. We'll now proceed to page-by-page review of the capital estimates, starting on page C3, finance centre administrative fund, total capital expenditure \$1 million. Questions, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As outlined in the opening comments, the enterprise resource planning system had a carryover of \$18.4 million and then I know this is the closeout money that's being requested now. I would just like to ask a question. Is this project on schedule? That's a significant carryover, which sometimes leads to delays. I just want to get confirmation that the project is still on schedule. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is on schedule. This is the time that most of the funding will be spent, and as far as we know, everything is on schedule and on budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to get some feedback from the minister on another aspect of the opening comments of prioritizing Petroleum Products Division to utilize this program at the earliest possible time, to help alleviate some of the pressures that they are undergoing in their financial accounting and planning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we will go over very finely the comments made by the chair in the concerns and questions surrounding the timelines of opening this new program for other departments and sectors. We definitely take that into consideration and make it a priority as and when we can get to that level of work with the program in that department, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. It has been mentioned a couple of times that there has been some trial piloting of the program in some departments right now. What is the result of those pilots or those tests of the system? Is the department comfortable with the progress to date, and the implementation schedule? Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In general the department is very pleased with the outcome of the pilots we have so far. If I can get Mr. Young to maybe give a little more detail in that aspect. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Deputy Minister Young.

**Mr. Young:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question. To date we have one pilot project in the Department of Finance and that's only for the module which is time and attendance. So that's leave credits and the time that someone is at the office. There are some issues with it and that was the point of the prototype, to make sure we can roll it out and see how it works in real time. Those are being fixed as we go along. Because of that we are confident we are catching all the errors and things are improving for sure. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. I have no more names. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's substantiation sheet for this project indicates that the government is actively negotiating a master services agreement with the vendor. As of today what is the status of this process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The discussions are ongoing and things are going smoothly in that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This one interests me, so I will ask it. Your department's substantiation sheet for this project indicates that the new enterprise resource planning system will require ongoing annual operations and maintenance expenditures of approximately \$3.33 million for program costs related to licensing fees and other expenditures. How is this amount determined? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.*

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. This amount depends on the number of users and types of licences that we purchase. And it's ongoing. Those are the costs of doing business and getting the licences and support for these programs, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would love to know about this one, too. Your department's substantiation sheet for this project indicates that it will place the government's current finance and human resources system. To what extent will public agencies and territorial corporations, including the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the

Qulliq Energy Corporation and Nunavut Arctic College utilize the new system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier we will start with the core programming of our government departments and once we have that running smoothly, we will then work with the corporations that my colleague just outlined and bring them into the fold. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question. In its response to a recommendation contained in the auditor general's recent report on COVID-19 vaccines, the Department of Health indicates that it will work with the Government of Nunavut departments on the design of the human resource modules within the newly procured enterprise resource planning system. Module deployment is scheduled for fall 2024. The system will track the completion of orientation and training programs for health care staff, monitor whether their licences and certifications are up to date, and provide regular reports of overdue training and expired licences or certifications.

The question is, Mr. **Chairman:** What other kinds of specialized tracking will the new enterprise resource planning system be able to perform? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my last question.

**Chairman (interpretation):** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This new program has a lot of avenues and areas that it can deploy and detect and work towards, and we'll ensure that the departments have ways of using this new program, can access it to the fullest, Mr. Chairman. There's a number of ways that this can be used and accessed by many other departments, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. I have no more names. Any more questions? (interpretation ends) Finance, total capital expenditure, 1 million. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree we conclude Finance.

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Any brief closing remarks, Minister Kusugak?

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak:** Thank you very much, colleagues. I would like to thank the gentlemen beside me who have been working hard on this file. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** The officials may remove themselves from the table. I ask members to stay in your seats while we will be arguing education's budget.

**Chairman:** I would like to call this committee back to order. I would like to ask Minister Gross, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do. *Quana*.

**Chairman:** Does the committee agree to let Minister's officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials in. For the record, Minister Gross, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Chair. To my left, to your right, we have Deputy Minister Rebecca Hainnu and to my right, to your left, we have manager of capital planning, Barry Cornthwaite.

Chair, I'm pleased to be here today to present the Department of Education's proposed 2025-2026 capital estimates which total \$56,050,000. The 45 schools across Nunavut represent a significant capital investment and commitment to education. Our schools host 10,852 students from kindergarten to grade 12, with 2,080 in the Kitikmeot, 3,406 in the Kivalliq, and 5,366 in the Qikiqtani.

Chair, the following capital projects will begin or continue to progress during the 2025-2026 fiscal year across Nunavut:

Coral Harbour will continue in the construction phase with renovations and the addition at the Sakku school. The project will give Coral Harbour access to a healthy code-compliant, a large gym, and more services for young children and their parents. The anticipated completion date is November 2027.

Taloyoak's new high school project will continue in the construction phase. The project is scheduled to be completed by August 2026. The new high school will eliminate the current overcrowding at the school. Our department will continue upgrading IT infrastructure. There's a need to replace or repair intrusion alarms, CCTVs, paging systems and telephone systems. There's also an additional need to replace internet

capable devices, such as computers, modem, routers, smart boards and printers, to ensure they are capable with compatible software.

Our department will continue with its ongoing life cycle repairs. Life cycle items include major components of a building, such as foundations, boilers, generators, rooves, siding, flooring, wall finishes, windows, and air handling units. These components require periodic repairs or replacements if they have not met or exceeded their intended life span.

This budget allows us to prioritize our capital projects and those in collaboration with the Department of Community and Government Services. Additionally, this budget also prepares us for any needed repairs or replacements to help minimize any potential impacts to the delivery of school programs.

Chair, the Department of Education also has various minor capital projects which will continue in 2025-2026. This budget covers projects that are often health and safety related, and small projects such as wheelchair ramps, chair lifts, and mold remediation.

Lastly, each year we review requests for school busses and departmental vehicles. In 2025-2026 we will continue to prioritize bussing needs across the territory.

Thank you, Chair, and I look forward to the questions and comments of committee members as we review these capital estimates for 2025-2026. *Quana.*

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Does the chair of the Standing Committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Chair. I'm happy to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on social wellness as the Committee of the Whole begins its consideration of the proposed 2025-2026 capital estimates of the Department of Education.

Chair, the Department of Education's proposed capital estimates for 2025-2026 comes to a total of \$56,050,000 for capital projects in the communities of Coral Harbour and Taloyoak, as well as four budget items to provide funding for various Nunavut-wide capital needs, including school maintenance and repair, school busses, and information technology.

Ongoing funding for the Sakku school renovation project is being requested for 2025-2026. The Coral Harbour school project also includes a new community learning centre for Nunavut Arctic College. Members have been given to understand that the new community learning centre will be a modular unit that is currently being used for school students while construction work is under way at school.

The Standing Committee encourages the minister to work with her colleagues responsible for Nunavut Arctic College to ensure adult learners in the community have ongoing access to space for their programs, to continue during the school construction phases. Members further encourage the department to consider options respecting the use of modular classrooms in their communities where overcrowding in schools is a growing area of concern.

Chair, the department has been developing new capital standards for school buildings. Members have raised questions about how these standards, in combination with the new student-educator ratio formula used to calculate school utilization rates, have impacted such potential projects as the major school renovation project in Arctic Bay. This Assembly approved funding for the initial stages of the Arctic Bay project in 2024-2025, but it no longer appears on the capital plan.

The department's 2025-2026 budget includes a funding request for over \$31 million for the construction phase of the new school project in Taloyoak. The Standing Committee has been given to understand that the department has had to adjust funding transferred on this project to enable the contractor to proceed with construction work during the current fiscal year. Members encourage the departmental officials to carefully monitor progress on Taloyoak's new high school project to ensure it does not run over budget and is completed in a timely manner.

Mr. Chair, I assure you I have read these before. I'm not sure why I'm stumbling.

Chair, the Department of Education's capital estimates also include four budget items for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, including minor capital, ongoing life cycle, school busses, and IT infrastructure. Funding from the ongoing life cycle budget is generally allocated to capital project, involving projects involving repairs and renovations to existing schools and more recently to full-day kindergarten expansion projects in schools across the territory.

Members note that the amount of funding required to implement the full-day kindergarten program across Nunavut is steadily increasing, which in turn is reducing the amount of funding available for general school repair projects.

The strain on the ongoing life cycle budget is noticeable. This summer the Standing Committee received notification of budget transfers from the IT infrastructure budget to ensure that school renovation and repair projects in a number of communities could proceed. This raises the additional concern that work intended to be carried out with funds allocated under the IT infrastructure budget will not proceed this year. The department is proposing an increase of \$2 million for the ongoing life cycle budget in 2025-2026 to accommodate needs notified this area.

The Standing Committee appreciates that ongoing life cycle projects are not considered a standalone budget in the capital estimates; however, the Standing Committee strongly encourages the minister and her staff to work with the departments of Community and Government Services and the Department of Finance to establish the full-day kindergarten program as a standalone capital project, instead of a project within the ongoing life cycle budget.

Members further appreciate that schools identified for the next phase of the full-day kindergarten program expansion are selected based on cost and affordability of the proposed expansion work. However, concerns have been raised that had communities with larger cohorts of pre-kindergarten-aged children or communities with higher birth rates may not be prioritized under this process.

Members continue to support the department's initiative to ensure emergency repairs at Nunavut schools can be undertaken in a timely manner through the establishment of an emergency repairs budget to be accessed by the Department of Community and Government Services, as needed.

Chair, the lack of storage for school busses to protect them from the elements and from vandalism continues to be an ongoing issue in some communities. The Standing Committee again urges the Department of Education to work with district education authorities and hamlet officials to identify suitable garage space in those communities where the lack of such space is impacting the delivery of school bus services, especially during the coldest and darkest months of the year.

Chair, information technology is an integral component of programs and services across the territory. The Standing Committee supports the department's efforts to ensure that such equipment as internet-capable devices, networks, student and staff computers, as well as closed-circuit television systems and intrusion alarm systems are kept up-to-date, and of course operational.

Chair, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2025-2026 capital estimates of the Department of Education. I am certain that individual members will also have comments and questions as we proceed. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions. I see none. We'll now proceed to page-by-page review of the capital estimate starting on page G3, corporate service, total capital expenditure \$56,050,000. Questions. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have many questions but I would like to start off with the capital project substantiation sheet on ongoing life cycle. This year's request is \$10 million, but when I look in forward years, it drops down to \$8 million per year. And we all know that there's continual challenges of keeping our schools open and safe

for our students and staff. My first question is, I'm curious as to why that number is projected to go down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. It's in consultation with the Department of Finance that that number was at \$10 million. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and while I do recognize that the Department of Finance has quite a bit of authority on what approvals or what projects go forward to approval at the cabinet level, I also think that it's the Minister's job to help make sure that the resources are being provided to their officials to be able to continue to do their jobs. I have often said a minister's job is to give the department the resources to do their job.

I would like to strongly encourage the minister, if the \$8 million reduction continues to continue, to work with her cabinet colleagues to make sure that feature years are sufficient to maintain the quality that we expect out of our schools. But I'll move on.

Also in the substantiation sheet on departmental vehicles, on page 2 of 3, during the cost it talks about school bus, 72-passenger school bus costs. In the bottom it says:

"In addition to the harsh climate, Nunavut puts additional strain on vehicles that require increasing repairs, and maintenance costs for busses and vehicles has increased."

There is an example given in one community, two busses that cost 90,000 to repair. From the Chair's opening comments my first question, and I don't want to delve into too much specific on that individual community, but I would like to get a rough breakdown on repair costs, whether they are repair costs or whether they are repairing from vandalism costs. If the department has maybe a ratio within that budget? Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for first of all the comment made previously and the question on bussing. To be short, Mr. Chair, the main issue for the bus costs for repairs is due to vandalism, and I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to supplement with further information that he has obtained. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Cornthwaite, please proceed.

**Mr. Cornthwaite:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you very much for the question. Basically in Nunavut there aren't local mechanics to repair busses, so one of the costs of repairing busses is mechanics travelling to the communities. Like the minister said, much of it is vandalism. A lot of it is the busses breaking down themselves, due to ongoing usage. So we have three costs involved: The cost of travelling to the communities, the cost of repairing vandalism, and cost of repairing mechanical failures. I don't have a percentage breakdown but we can certainly provide that after, if need be. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Hickers.

**Mr. Hickers:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Cornthwaite for that response. It leads me to my next one, which was also covered in our chair's opening comments, the need for garages and storage space for our busses. I think this is obvious that this would alleviate a lot of the additional expenses.

My first question on this line is how much work is done with either contractors or hamlets that provide bussing services? I know here in Iqaluit busses are stored inside with our contractor, and we're lucky to have that service available, but in other communities where there's no storage available, Community and Government Services has a program to help hamlets, or I'm not sure exactly who qualifies for it, whether it be whether DAs would qualify under that as well, for a program to provide funding for a warehouse and garages.

Does the Department of Education assist DAs or hamlets with applying for other program dollars that are available to provide shelters for these busses, to limit the vandalism and breakdown and stress on them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you once again for the question. Yes, the Department of Education does work with contractors to secure funding, and also works to ensure that contractors are able to provide shelters for the busses if they are not in the community already. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Hickers.

**Mr. Hickers:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Probably the last topic I'll bring up is fuel tanks. I'm sure the minister is uncomfortably comfortable, I guess, with some of the happenings that have been going on around the territory, not just in the Department of Education. There have been airports and a number of different pieces of major infrastructure that have had serious fuel leaks in the last few years.



What concerns me the most is school closures due to fuel leaks. I know the department takes it upon itself to do inspections and infrastructure reviews, condition ratings and I would just like to encourage the minister and Mr. Cornthwaite and his team to make sure that fuel tanks is a top, top priority for inspections. We can't afford any more school closures. We can't afford major fuel spills. The mitigation costs are astronomical. I will leave that as a comment, but I would appreciate to get the agreement from the minister that this will, if it's not already a priority which I'm assuming it is because of the recent occurrences, that it will maintain being a priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that comment. Yes, it is a priority to ensure that the fuel tanks are safe and you up to date and code compliant. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Next name on my list is Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and your officials. It's great to see you here at the House. The first question I would like to ask, in Baker Lake we have two schools. Is there enough room for the students now? Or not enough room. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The schools in Baker Lake, I can say that the Rachel Arngnamaktiq school is under future pre-planning and we're looking to have it go forward in the future. Hopefully it will get approval for that phase, but there are three other schools that we wish to also go through the pre-planning cycle, so I don't have a timeline on when it is.

In terms of the utilization of the schools, just one moment, please. For Baker Lake Jonah Amitnaaq school, it's at utilization 96, and the Rachel Arngnamaktiq school is at 61 per cent. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you to the minister. Jonah Amitnaaq school is at 96 per cent. However, on October 18, 2024, the minister wrote to us that the Jonah school is at 105 per cent. I'm not really clear. Am I misunderstanding something? Which figure is more factual? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross, could you give a clarification.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the member for pointing that out. That was a mistake. I was reading the wrong column, as the page has a lot of information and small numbers.

For 2023-2024 the Joan Amitnaaq school is at 105. I was reading from two years prior. I'm sorry about that. And for the other school, the Rachel school, it's at 77 per cent. Sorry for my correction and mistake.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak (interpretation):** Thank you Mr. Chairman and the minister. The Jonah school is at 105 per cent, and with shortage of space, what consideration is given, though, to rectify the situation? And what plans are there for the near future? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you once again to the member. We'll have to work with the local district education authority on the specific plan to see about the utilization as it has come up to 105 per cent, but we do have a number of schools that are above 100 per cent, Mr. Chair, so we do have a lot of schools that constantly need improving, either through expansion and renovation or new builds. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** So I'm curious now. How many schools are currently overcrowded, with utilization rates over 85 per cent? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We currently have 18 schools at over 85 per cent utilization. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** The minister mentioned earlier that there are some school that are over 100 per cent. How many schools in Nunavut are over 100 per cent utilization rate? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that. Currently, it's just easier if I read them off, we have Igloolik high school at 104 per cent. Sanirajak Arnaqjuaq school at 105 per cent; the Qiqirtaq school in Gjoa Haven, 117 per cent. Kugluktuk high school, 143 per cent. Taloyoak Netsilik School, 119 per cent. Arviat Qitiqliq middle school 110 per cent. Baker Lake, Jonah Amitnaaq school, 105 per cent. Naujaat, Tuugaalik high school, 116 per cent. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister. With so many schools that are above 85 per cent, that's 18 of them. And two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight schools, if I was keeping up correctly, that are over 100 per cent utilization elaborate how is the department going to plan to get the schools either expanded, renovated or a new school built? And what kind of timeline are we looking at? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The department has a number of projects in pre planning that we're looking to bring forward, and projects that we're working on for capital projects so we have projects at various stages, but we are looking to always progress our schools further and have them go through the pre-planning phase, but I can ask Mr. Cornthwaite to further elaborate on what his department is doing specifically for school repairs or renovations, expansions or new schools. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite, please proceed.

**Mr. Cornthwaite:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question. The Department of Education works very closely with Community and Government Services' capital division on future planning for the facilities and our schools in Nunavut. Currently we just did a community consultation on the elementary schools in Iqaluit to help us decide our best path forward. We have been doing build and condition assessments on several schools also, to help us plan for the future to see what needs to be done for health and safety for the schools to ensure they're safe and healthy for the students.

The challenge that we're faced is the amount of money that's available to build new schools where we're experiencing increased construction costs. When I first started with the department we were building schools for \$6,000 a square metre. Now we're building schools for \$23,000 a square metre. So it's a substantial cost increase.

I feel if we work closely with Community and Government Services, the Department of Education can develop a plan with our partners to ensure health and safety for the students and the correct capacity to ensure the students aren't overcrowded. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So for Baker Lake being at 105 per cent capacity, where is Baker Lake now in the scheme of things for a new school build? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for the question. The Baker Lake elementary school is being considered for pre-planning so we hope to bring it forward for pre-planning and the department is working on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. Mr. Chairman, the minister said she hopes to bring Jonah Amitnaaq school, her pre-planning hope is very vague. Is it this fiscal year? Next fiscal year? What kind of timeline are we looking at here? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So we will bring them to pre-planning, but they have to get approved by the pre-planning people that are sitting on around that table. So we do hope that they would suggest them to go forward to pre-planning. And I have said this in the House that for 2025-2026 there were no education projects approved for pre-planning so we hope that the next go around there will be capital projects going forward for education. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So would that be fiscal year 2026-2027. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If it's approved, yes, then that's the timeline. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Moving along to my next question, substantiation sheet, page 2 of 3. In the middle there, it says:

"Some projects completed in 2023-2024 including but not limited to special needs washroom Baker Lake, diesel spill cleanup Igloolik and Taloyoak, mold inspections Igloolik."

It's the Baker Lake school I would like to discuss right now. I brought it up in this House assembly during previous sittings and also by e-mail. And my last correspondence with the minister, the project is done, especially washroom renovation project was done at the Jonah Amitnaaq Secondary School, but substantially smaller. Originally, it was supposed to be a 12, 13 foot expansion. It ended up being about an 18-inch expansion, and I believe at a cost of about \$300,000. I e-mailed the minister asking for the total cost. She wasn't able to give me an answer at the time.

I wonder if the minister has the final renovation cost for that project. Is it \$300,000? Or what's the actual final cost for that project? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to ask Mr. Hainnu to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Ms. Hainnu, please proceed.

**Ms. Hainnu (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can hear me, yes? Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, MLA, for asking the question.

I'm very pleased to say that school in Taloyoak, there was no washrooms before for disabled students. The recent changes made significant change, and we had written to the MLA with not just the washroom that was worked on. Teacher's office was included and the sentry room was also included. These were expensive, and with limited resources we have, they were changes to the plan.

The washroom is exactly the same in other schools, and it's perfectly good size. The toilet is not any smaller. And you can also get lower and higher. The size didn't really change. The office expansion and the class for students. The washroom didn't change. And I'm pleased to say that you continually supporting students. And when it's ready for inspection that was already completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister and staff. I must have missed the dollar figure. Do you know the dollar figure of the final project cost for the special needs washroom in Baker Lake? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member. Yes, I thought I said it was 300,000 but, you know, this is one of those areas where we're sitting here and sometimes I'm sorry to have not said that if I didn't, but yes, that's the price that it was. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did have the opportunity to visit the high school before I came here for this fall sitting. I did see the washroom. The change table was installed, but there's no other room for the amenities that are needed to properly and safely help a special needs person that needs to use the washroom.

There's a lift that needs to be used that's taken in and out. An occupational therapist did visit Baker Lake, and he or she said that this will not work; there's not enough space, there's not enough room to properly help the special needs student use this human rights need, basic need to use a washroom.

The department spent \$300,000 for an 18-inch expansion, 18 inches; is that a foot and a half, 18 inches. So it's over 30 inches or something like that.

It was originally a 12-foot expansion, but that dropped, fell substantially, and it cost \$300,000. They were supposed to work closely with Community and Government Services. It's not right. It shouldn't have happened. There was proper planning with the school on how it should be, so that they can properly facilitate the special needs washroom. Somewhere along the line, either Education or are Community and Government Services dropped the ball and spent \$300,000 for a washroom that cannot be properly and safely used by the student, the teacher and the assistant that helps the student, because there has to be two adults to help the student use the special needs washroom. So this is a vast waste of money on this one project.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross, what's your point of order.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. We have had numerous communications back and forth with the member, and I really appreciate his advocacy on the topic. We have had the confirmation that the building is to code and the...

**Chairman:** Minister, what's your point of order?

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** What the member is saying is not true. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Member Simailak, please be careful with your wordings, the questions. Mr. Simailak, please proceed.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do hope the department will take extra special care on how they utilize monies, public monies, to ensure that the needs are met properly in a physically mannerable way. We were in here every day asking for needs, not wants, and we keep hearing that there is not enough money.

This one project spent \$300,000. That could have been done for a lot cheaper. I'm done for now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member. We do look forward to the utilization for everybody in the school, and we worked hard for the community to ensure that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Next person on my list, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question (interpretation ends) is that a number of school building conditions assessments are being carried out in 2023-2024. How many schools have had their buildings condition assessed to date, and in which communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've had five. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** (No interpretation).

**Chairman:** Minister Gross, what was the answer to the question? Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, sorry, I didn't realize there was a second part of which communities they were.

I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to share which communities had the condition ratings. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Cornthwaite, please proceed.

**Mr. Cornthwaite:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question. Building condition assessments are being carried out in Kimmirut, Sanirajak, Igloodik, Kugluktuk, and the middle school in Arviat, Qitiqliq School. Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak:** Thank you, Mr. Cornthwaite. Thank you for the response. (interpretation) Are other communities getting their condition ratings, like in Pond Inlet? (interpretation) The schools, the lower levels and the Ulaajuk School, both schools require renovations. The food preparation program is taught at the kitchen and at the Ulaajuk School. The school, will they be assessed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Member for the question. Yes, we can commit to that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Can you say when they will be visiting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We can do that soon, but we can start the preliminary planning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** Thank you. Also, after the condition rating is done and the work was identified that needs done, what steps, do you take some or not picked on right away. Who does the actual work order, and what kind of priority does it receive; how do you prioritize projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** (No interpretation).

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. Our priorities are always health and safety issues first, so those are our top priorities. But we do go through and use our minor capital projects to ensure that if there are any issues that need immediate repair, that we have funds available to do those minor capital projects and have done various things related to health and safety, water



purchases, bus repair, unplanned maintenance, carpentry services, sea can storage, freight; all those types of things fall under what we do and we have the budget for under minor capital. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak (interpretation):** Thank you. And to another area, thank you for the two schools. The carpet was removed. And upstairs the carpet needs to be removed. For those that have allergies, the carpet has been a concern. When will the upstairs carpet be removed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can say that the contract has been signed, so we're looking forward to that work starting as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak:** Thank you. That is good to hear. In conclusion, we are slowly overfilling the schools and will require another school for the lower grades. We're maxing out the spaces. I would like Pond Inlet noted on the list as requiring a school in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** I didn't hear a question. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Qujannamiik.* (No interpretation)

**Chairman:** Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I go on to ask my lines of questioning, for the Taloyoak's new high school, I wanted to thank the District Education Authority and the principal for the Netsilik School. Over the summer they did a contest to name the new high school. I wanted to proudly inform my constituents that it has a new name, so it's Tungnuq (ph) High School, and I thank the community for all their input, and for naming the new high school, and I will go on to ask my lines of questioning.

First of all, I would like to ask the department is requesting 31.5 million for work on the new school project for Taloyoak in 2024-2026. What is the current status of this project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my first question.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The project is ahead of schedule, and the steel is all up, and it's anticipated that it will be completed by August 31, 2026. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the minister already answered this question, but I'll do it for clarification. Documentation provided with the department's capital estimates show that the cost for the new school in Taloyoak is 86.8 million. What specific factors were determined whether the new school project to be completed on time and within the current budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the member please repeat the question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Can you please repeat your question, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question is what specific factors will determine whether the new school project in Taloyoak be completed on time and within the current budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the member for repeating the question. Our capital team is working very hard to ensure that the contractors and everyone is staying aligned with the construction. It started in the fall of 2023 with site grading. As I stated earlier, it's anticipated to be completed by August 31, 2026 and is ahead of schedule. So we're very excited about that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will want school additions and renovations. Taloyoak's new high school project originally included renovations to the current school.

Correspondence from Minister in March 2024 indicates that floor renovations were carried out under the 2024-2025 Ongoing Life Cycle Budget, and the question is, Mr. Chairman, is this renovation completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. For the renovation there will be more work done next fiscal year, thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Quqquiaq.

**Mr. Quqquiaq:** Thank you. I'll move on to the bussing services. But first of all, I would like to thank the District Education Authority, which me and the premier visited. We met with the DEA, and what we learned was that the DEA got the quomoqatuk (ph) contract bussing services for the community. And I thank the DEA greatly, and I also thank for bringing the bussing services in the community for Aivilik and ilinarviq students, which is great.

And I'll move on to the correspondence which is dated October 18, 2024 to the chair of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness, MLA for Iqaluit-Sinaa, which is chair for the Standing Committee on Social Wellness. It goes on to state that the Taloyoak busses and lighting.

During our appearance we were asked about the school busses in Taloyoak. I can inform the committee that the busses in Taloyoak are being surplused, and the District Education Authority will request a new bus. The department will consider the request against other requests and needs and may be able to purchase a new bus for Taloyoak in the coming fiscal year. Further, the department will be working to tender bussing services for the community so that they may be provided by an external agency rather than the District Education Authority.

So that being said, Mr. Chairman, I think the Department of Education rather than the District Education Authority can help for the bussing services in Taloyoak.

What I learned was that over in Kugaaruk, the District Education Authority asked the Co-op in the contract the DEA for illinavik (ph), and that's great for the community, because what it allows for the Co-op to do is it makes money, and that means dividends and profit for the community. And when it's profit and there's dividends, it's for the members of the community.

So I highly recommend the Department of Education to consider for Taloyoak, if possible, and if the Co-op is interested in contracting that service for the community of Taloyoak. I would highly recommend that the education department work with the Paleajook Co-op so they can contract the bussing service in Taloyoak, which will benefit the community greatly when it comes to the members. And I would like to hear the minister's response on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. We do have to do the public tender process, but we would hope that the Co-op would put in a tender for the bussing services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Minister for your response. I will go on to the lighting for the Netsilik School. Also in that same correspondence dated October 18, 2024, it also indicated that we were also asked about the exterior lighting around the school in Taloyoak. Department officials have since reached out to the Department of Community and Government Services to request additional lighting be installed.

So my question now, Mr. Chairman, has the department reached out to the CGS to assure that the additional lighting be installed as soon as possible, especially when the winter is coming and it's very dark now, and it gets dark very early. And it's for many great reasons for the students when they are done after school, and it gets very dark in this current time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that request was brought forward to Community and Government Services and the request is being reviewed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you Minister for your response. My hope is that the CGS does the installation of the lighting outside the Netsilik School. I'll go on, Mr. Chairman.

In the same correspondence, it also indicates about FANS office renovations in Arviat. And also it states that a question was raised during that appearance around the recent renovations made to the Paunna building in Arviat, where our financial assistance for Nunavut students, FANS office is located. And it also indicates that the minister asked her officials to investigate the renovations which impacted on FANS operations this summer.

It was brought to my attention that unfortunately that renovations impacted FANS operations and resulted in some late student payments. And also the disruption in FANS services were unfortunate. And she also indicated she was sorry that FANS students were negatively affected. And also it indicates that she also indicates that as we implement our revised FANS program, including a new computer system, issues like those noted will be easier to mitigate.

Mr. Chairman, recently over the weekend I had to help one of my constituents, which is a FANS student, and I had to buy groceries for my constituents, due to the late payment from the FANS department. There were children involved, Mr. Chairman, and that really hurt me. So I took the necessary steps to help my constituents.

And now my question is, Mr. Chairman, will the Minister assure that the FANS payments be on time for all the FANS students in Nunavut, so that no students would have to look for help, especially when it comes to children who are here with them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for, first of all, supporting the student. We never want to student to go through hardship, but we are working to ensure that improvements are made to our database, and hence the reason why it was hard for our FANS department to leave the building, because the technology is very outdated with our FANS database. We look forward to bringing the new system forward.

However, the staff did need to be able to access the database, and it couldn't leave that office building, so we did have staff working out of the Paunna building, in Arviat.

In terms of ensuring that students are paid on time, we do work with the Nunavut Arctic College. The majority of our FANS recipients are college students. There is a form that they have to fill out to ensure that they are enrolled in the college, and we are working to streamline that process, so that students can fill that form out online and get paid right away.

But with the government system, it does take time to ensure that the cheques and balances are there for students. And with different departments, such as finance, to ensure that those payments are accurate and that the students are actually students and so forth. Verification does take time, but we are working to improve that. And with the FANS comprehensive review that we have, we will see hopefully more improvements to the FANS program, and we are excited about that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the minister for her responses. Also I wanted to note that when it comes to FANS students, I spoke with my colleagues here in Iqaluit, and there's also additional supports from the general public who are not from Iqaluit that come from other communities in Nunavut. There are additional supports like, say for example there's the food bank, and there's also the Qajuqturvik if you need additional supports.

And not only that, when it comes to country food, there's the local HTO which distributes country food to anyone in the city of Iqaluit. That's for the general public's information for the students here in Iqaluit.

So if you don't receive your FANS payments on time, and if you do need support, there's a food bank in the city. There's the Qajuqturvik that you can reach out to and also I just mentioned about the local HTO does give out country food to people. Just a statement, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Next name on my list is Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chair. I have three topics that I would like to cover this evening with education and the schools and the planning process, full-day kindergarten, and the situation in our middle school here in Iqaluit.

I would like to carry on with discussions around pre-planning school utilization and the need -- the duration and length of time it takes for a capital project, such as a new school or major renovation to go through the process.

If I recall correctly, I think it was the Department of Education's capital plan that had said that the process is very lengthy, and it could take as long as eight years to go from starting the pre-planning to the substantial completion.

I was wondering if you would be able to provide the House with some more details about the process that the Department of Education goes through from the start to finish for these major capital projects and provide some sort of estimate or best guess as to whether or not that eight year estimate still holds true. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The traditional design building client department project process map does indicate that, yes, it is an eight-year process, and I can commit to providing the full details to our colleagues.

Just in summary, the first year would be from the client department, so Department of Education. The second year is with the facility planner, which is still in the planning phase, as well as year three in the planning phase. Year four is design. Year five to eight is construction. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Minister, for elaborating on that. Give us an idea of the process of Department of Education goes through to get these capital requests put through. So the minister had indicated that unfortunately there was no pre-planning, sorry the Department of Education application to the pre-planning budgets have not been approved for the upcoming fiscal year, 2025-2026.

So just to I guess get more information around that, I would like to ask when was the last time the Department of Education's submission to the capital planning envelope was actually approved, and how many years did it take for that project, or how many applications did you have to go through to get that request approved. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross. (interpretation) Thank you, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There's a lot of corporate knowledge we have sitting beside me, so I would like to ask Mr. Cornthwaite to share his knowledge on that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Cornthwaite.

**Mr. Cornthwaite:** Thank you for the question. The last school that we got through to pre-planning was Iqaluit Nakasuk School. And since then, the member knows we applied to have it be all elementary schools.

Prior to that, it was Arctic Bay, and Arctic Bay is not on the capital plan this year, but it was on the capital plan last year. I'm talking fiscal year next year is not on 2025-2026.

It was taken off because of the increase in costs caught the government off guard. It was going to be \$100 million school. So there was rethinking being done now back to the table to try to figure it out. We also have new design guidelines that have impacted the cost of building a school, because they take into consideration cafeterias for food programs, day cares for the students and other health and safety issues.

So unfortunately, and I think the member is very aware of this, that there are tank farms that need increasing, there are airports need increasing, there is sewage linkages that need increasing. We're doing Nunavut 3000, has a big impact on Nunavut. So I'm not saying schools aren't important, but there's a situation where many considerations that had to be taken by the Government of Nunavut for projects. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Cornthwaite, for painting the picture for us. You're absolutely right, the Department of Education does have to compete

with the many infrastructure requirements, and of course health and safety will most often always trump other priorities.

So with school utilization rates, 18 schools beyond that 85 per cent threshold, and a number of schools beyond that 100 per cent utilization rate, I think it's important for the Department of Community of Government Services and Department of Finance that pre-planning envelope committee to really take this specific matter to heart. Because when the Department of Education is designing plans for new schools, that's based off of the school attendance, not school enrolment.

What I'm trying to say is the school planning process tends to be backward looking for forward-looking reasons. So what I'm trying to say is you're trying to justify your need for a future school, based off of prior year enrolment numbers.

And I thank the minister for the written response to the committee, because I had asked whether or not the Department of Education takes community population projections into account, given our high utilization rates.

I was wondering if the minister could elaborate for the benefit of the committee your response in your written submission to the committee. Thank you, Chair.

**Co-Chairman (Mr. Hickes):** Thank you, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. For the written submission to the Standing Committee on social wellness on school utilization, I committed to providing a breakdown for the school utilization by school, and that breakdown is provided in a table that is also provided in the document, and they can see it twice for their information.

There is a note that says that the rates of utilization between 2019 and 2020 and 2020 and 2021 school year. There's two different columns there. This is because we moved from utilization calculating full-time enrolment numbers to a calculation using head count numbers.

Full-time enrolment is the total enrolment number minus students who are absent from school more than 40 per cent of the time.

Head count numbers include all enrolled students, regardless of attendance. So that summarizes the point there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Co-Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.



**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I guess I should have been more precise. In your response regarding projecting school populations and utilizing future population, you had noted that the department indicated we were restricted in our school planning, as we could not base new construction or renovations on future populations.

Then you go on to say that CGS has indicated while there are certain restriction related to size of new builds we can plan around projected population growth to some extent. I was wondering if you can further elaborate on what those two sentences meant, specifically why you can't currently use future projections for your capital substantiation, and secondly, how has CGS determined that you can plan around protected population growth to some extent. I wonder if you can further elaborate specifically on that aspect. Thank you, Chair.

**Co-Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for asking that.

So the Department of Education does work with Community and Government Services to ensure that our future population growth is factored into our schools as much as possible.

The department connects with the Department of Health as well, regarding community birth rates, and this will allow us to have a five year projection for kindergarten and subsequent enrolment numbers.

We are somewhat limited, however, in our ability to predict school enrolment, but we do make efforts to use that data that is available. So, for example, the planning around a potential Iqaluit elementary school project, education and Community and Government Services are reviewing past utilization rates and trends to help project future enrolment numbers.

Lastly, Mr. Chair, in the past our school utilization rates were based on our full-time enrolment numbers, which I had shared earlier, and using full-time head count enrolment numbers for planning of a school will help ensure that schools can accommodate growth populations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Co-Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister, for that response. I think the Department of Education is working in the right direction. I really hope that CGS and finance will help you identifying those trends along with the Department of Health in the birth statistics.

I think it's absolutely necessary, especially in our larger communities, with very high birth rates. Specifically here in Iqaluit, the city has been stunted in growth for a number of years. We have not had a major subdivision since the plateau. And over the last ten years, it's just been intensifying the core, basically.

However, over the coming years there's a couple of major developments in the works, and one is aiming to see over 800 new units in high rises being developed here, in Iqaluit, increasing our residential units by 20 per cent, and likely will see a significant population growth shortly after.

I'll move on to the next item. With regards to full day kindergarten, phase 1 can be five schools; phase 2, seven more. Now we're at the point where it's sort of unclear where the Department of Education wants to go or has the resources to go.

I would just like to ask what are the intentions for phase 3 and phase 4 of rolling out for full-day kindergarten. Thank you, Chair.

**Mr. Malliki (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you to the member for that question. We saw five schools come on board last school year, and we have seven schools that are currently rolled out for full-day kindergarten in Grise Fiord, Resolute Bay, Qikiqtarjuaq, Pond Inlet, Gjoa Haven, Sanikiluaq and Taloyoak. And for the other remaining schools across the territory, we are working on a business case to come forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Lightstone. (interpretation) Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Minister. So it's my understanding that the Department of Education chose phase 1 and 3 as low hanging fruit, the lowest cost and easiest rollout. Now the Department of Education is at the point where future expansion of full day kindergarten will cost significantly more.

So the next question as the Chair of the committee had indicated it's unclear whether or not the department intends to remain with cost driven decisions as full day kindergarten versus impact, number of children that would be impacted.

So I guess the next question I would like to ask is for the next determinant will the Department of Education select full day kindergarten based on cost, or number of students impacted. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's premature for me to say which factors will be decided upon, but I would suspect both. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Moving onto my last question. Sorry, I would like to go on to the ongoing life cycle project which did indicate that capital project deferred in 2024-2025 includes Aqsarniit middle school, citing windows and doors.

I was wondering if we can get an update on that, specifically because of a concern that I've heard from students and teachers, faculty in the middle school not only is the siding literally falling off in chunks, but there's really significant health concerns with regards to the south-facing windows, sorry, the classrooms that have south-facing windows that do not open and get very warm April, May and June.

Does the Department of Education have plans to remediate the window situation in Aqsarniit Middle School. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that the question. My community officials will be meeting with Community and Government Services officials to discuss the middle school here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik*. Next person on my list is Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Minister, and employees for capital projects for Sanirajak will be visited. We will be having a winter session here. Perhaps when they would be coming to Sanirajak to see the school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. The department is aware, and we're working on a timeline and we can talk to our colleague to see when an appropriate time to go to the community would be. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your opening comments, you mentioned the overcrowding in schools. Have you reviewed, in terms of population growth, Sanirajak, how do you assess the growth of a community, in terms of requiring a

school. Do you look at population trends. What factors do you use for the smaller communities as they start to grow and the requirement for more school facilities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member. We use the same formula on our schools all across the territory, and we utilize and are going with population growth from getting numbers from the Department of Health and the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics to obtain birth numbers and rates, and that will give us five year projections. We also do age of the building and condition of the building as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you. Thank you for the clarification and the school planning process. Mr. Chairman, member, Minister also spoke on the planning for schools. In terms of planning, what stage is Sanirajak at in the process. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair for Sanirajak it was submitted for pre-planning, but it wasn't approved, so we'll work to ensure that the next 2026-2027 fiscal year that it goes forward again with the other four schools for pre-planning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Why was that not approved. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Because of competing capital projects. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you. There are 25 communities, yes. You also mention 2026-2027 year that when you look at age when the facility was built for the planning process regarding Arnaqjuauq School is one of the older schools. Can you push the people that say yes.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* (interpretation) Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Gross thank you, Mr. Chair. Our department can mention it at the capital planning process, but it's a whole committee that decides. But, yes, we're always advocating, and hopefully some of our future plans will go forward in the future capital budgets. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The classrooms, in terms of overcrowding, the kitchen has become a classroom, due to the growth of the number of students. Do you also assess situations like that, where they've taken hold of other places to make classrooms in the school instead of enlarging the school or getting a new school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for bringing that forward. We'll ensure that we work with the District Education Authority on the matter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you. Yes, I would like that done. And to return, in your Opening Comment, Minor Capitals, \$1 million for foundations and generator for Sanirajak. The entrance ramp is wearing out. I wonder if, under minor capital, whether that can be fixed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member. We'll ensure that when the capital team goes to his constituency community of Sanirajak, that we'll look at the issues that he's bringing forward. And I've asked the team to go as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** I'm going to pause your question, Mr. Kaernerck. Mr. Hickers.

**Mr. Hickers:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Pursuant to Rule 6(2), I move the Committee of the Whole remain sitting until we conclude with the Department of Education. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. The motion is in order and not subject to debate. Do members agree?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** We will continue until we finish with the Department of Education. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you. Thank you for extending this session. Thank you. I also wanted to mention Minor Capital. It is noted, page 2, Minor Capital.

I mentioned earlier at question period regarding my community of Igloolik. Mold issues, the tank is not filled due to a crack in the tank. Will this also be repaired under Minor Capital, under the \$1 million fund. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you. Yes. A request has been submitted to replace the water tank. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Sorry. A request has been submitted to repair a water tank sensor. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you. In conclusion, 2026-2027 there will be another review. I wonder if standalone school, portable school, I wonder if you can put a portable school for the higher grades that can be used; have you reviewed that. Thank you. Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question. We always do want to keep our school community together in the school for the well-being of the students and to not separate them. But if the request is there to look into a portable for the higher grades, our department can look into that as an option for the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all agree education is important. It would be good to see students going to Nunavut Sivunikasavut and higher institutions of learning, so I would like in conclusion that I would like to see an addition

or stand alone school for the higher grades should really be reviewed. I would like that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for his advocacy. I have committed for the department to go to the community as soon as possible and look at the school, but also that we are and have put the project for pre-planning. So if it does get approved there in the next couple years, which we're hopeful for, that can be under consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have many questions, but my first question is what's the utilization rate for the three schools in Arviat currently. Thank you.

**Chairman (interpretation):** Thank you. Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the John Arnalukjuak School, it's utilization is at 77 per cent. The Levi Angmak Elementary School is at 93 per cent, and the Qikiqtaaluk Middle School is at 110 per cent. Sorry for my mispronunciation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Mut'na. Since two of the schools are above the 85 per cent capacity rate where they should start for either expansion or building another school, what are the plans for the Levi Angmak School and Qitiqliq School. Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. In terms of the middle school in Arviat, it is on our pre-planning list as one of the communities that we would like to go forward for consideration. As I stated to a couple of our other colleagues, there were no 2025-2026 education projects that went forward to pre-planning, but we do hope that the following fiscal year the four projects that we do have under consideration for pre-planning, that they will go forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister commit to when the pre-planning is going to be past the pre-planning stage for the middle school, thank you, in Arviat.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for that question. We do commit that we will bring it forward, and hopefully it will get approved in pre-planning for the following year.

I would like to note, Mr. Chair, that we are looking to fund capital projects through the federal government, and have submitted proposal alongside and hopefully we'll hear back for some current projects to supplement the Taloyoak High School.

We do look forward to putting other capital projects forward, for example, ones that are in the pre-planning envelope and to look for outside sources to fund those projects, as we do have a lot of projects that we want to get going forward, and there are restraints with the funds that are available. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The school at 110 per cent capacity, is that the highest, or one of the highest within Nunavut. Thank you.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Kugluktuk is at the highest at 143. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that either expansion or building a new school has to be a priority. I know capital funds are always an issue, but we want students to be able to go to school. And I would think that when the school is overcrowded and it's not a good atmosphere. There's more bullying, there's more stress. So if having students in school is a priority for the government, not just education, but the government, then more funds should be put into the capital funds for education so that we can build more schools so that we can have more students that want to go to school and that stay in school and graduate. I wish the minister well and I hope that the Arviat school gets put on the pre-planning for next year. *Taima.* Bye.

**Chairman:** *Qujannamiik.* Do you have comments to comments, Minister Gross?



**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we do always want our schools to advance, and we take his comments and we are working to bring them forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman (interpretation):** I got no more names on my list. Total capital expenditure 56,050,000. Agreed

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Do members agree we have concluded Education.

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Brief closing comments, Minister Gross.

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** Thank you to all the members around for their intriguing dialogue and for coming forward. We're always here to support our communities. We do get frequent questions by our colleagues across the territory, and the department works hand-in-hand with our other departments and we work to ensure that our students and educators have everything they need. Thank you all for your advocacy and bringing your points across to the department.

We look forward to the projects going forward for the next year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. Thank you, Minister, and members. I will now rise to report progress.

**Speaker:** Report of the Committee of the Whole, Mr. Malliki.

### **Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Malliki:** Mr. Speaker, your Committee has been considering Bill 61, and would like to report progress.

Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Is there a seconder. Mr. Kusugak. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 21, Third Reading of Bills. I recognize the Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeagok (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me.

(interpretation ends) I rise to express my sincere apology to you, Mr. Speaker, and proceeding related to the motion as we were discussing to rescind Bill 59. I misunderstood the process and incorrectly indicated that I did not want to speak to the motion. In no way did I intend to call into question your authority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** Apology accepted from the House. Item 22, *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Mr. Clerk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the Day for October 31:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statement
3. Members' Statement
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motion
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 53
  - Bill 54
  - Bill 55
  - Bill 61
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** This House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 31 at 1:30 p.m.  
Sergeant-at-Arms.

>> *House adjourned at 18:14*

